

TENT AND THRONE !

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A Romantic Play,

IN FIVE ACTS,

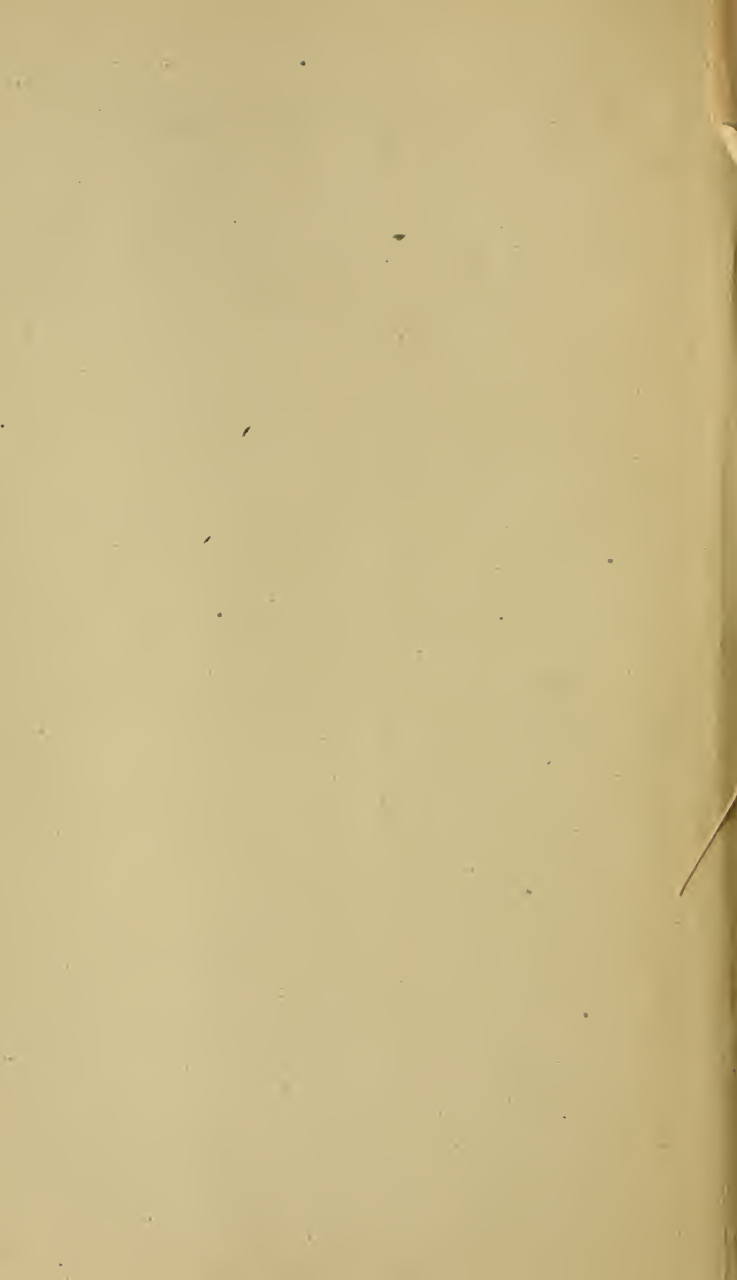
— BY —

✓
JOHN G. WILSON.

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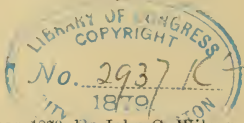
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CHARACTERS.

RICHARD CŒUR-DE-LION.

THE PRINCE JOHN.

LEOPOLD OF AUSTRIA.

SIR BALDWIN DE BETHUNE.

SIR WALTER DE L'ESTAING.

BLONDEL.

EDWARD.

ROGER.

FIRST AUSTRIAN OFFICER.

SECOND AUSTRIAN OFFICER.

WATCHMAN.

BERENGARIA.

GRETCHEN.

LANDLADY.

MESSENGERS, SOLDIERS, LADIES IN WAITING, ETC., ETC.

TENT AND THRONE.

ACT I.

MESSINA.

SCENE.—R. *Walls of Messina, with gate in centre, extending diagonally from first groove half way up stage—where sea commences and stretches to flat, which represents horizon. Tent projects from L. 2 E., practicable with royal flag flown from it. C., in front of sea, landing composed of four broad steps. An English flag is conspicuously planted on wall to R., of gates.*

TIME.—*Daybreak.*

Discovered—EDWARD and ROGER keeping watch by the tent.

EDW. It is a marvellous good law, friend Roger, that all things in this world have an ending—else keeping watch o' nights would be worse than going to the Saracen's perdition.

ROG. (*Gruffly*) Hm! Hm!

EDW. (*Mimicking him*) Hm! Hm! Thy mother must have been a talkative woman, comrade.

ROG. (*Chuckling*) My mother was the best churner in Kent.

EDW. Nay, that explains it all—her children being brought up with the cows, learned to chew and ruminate, but not to loosen their tongues. (*Roger laughs*). Laugh away, comrade—laughter is better than speech, though it be at the expense of thy own mother.

ROG. I laugh not at my mother.

EDW. I will wager she hath often laughed at thee.

ROG. Hm!

EDW. And with good cause too!—

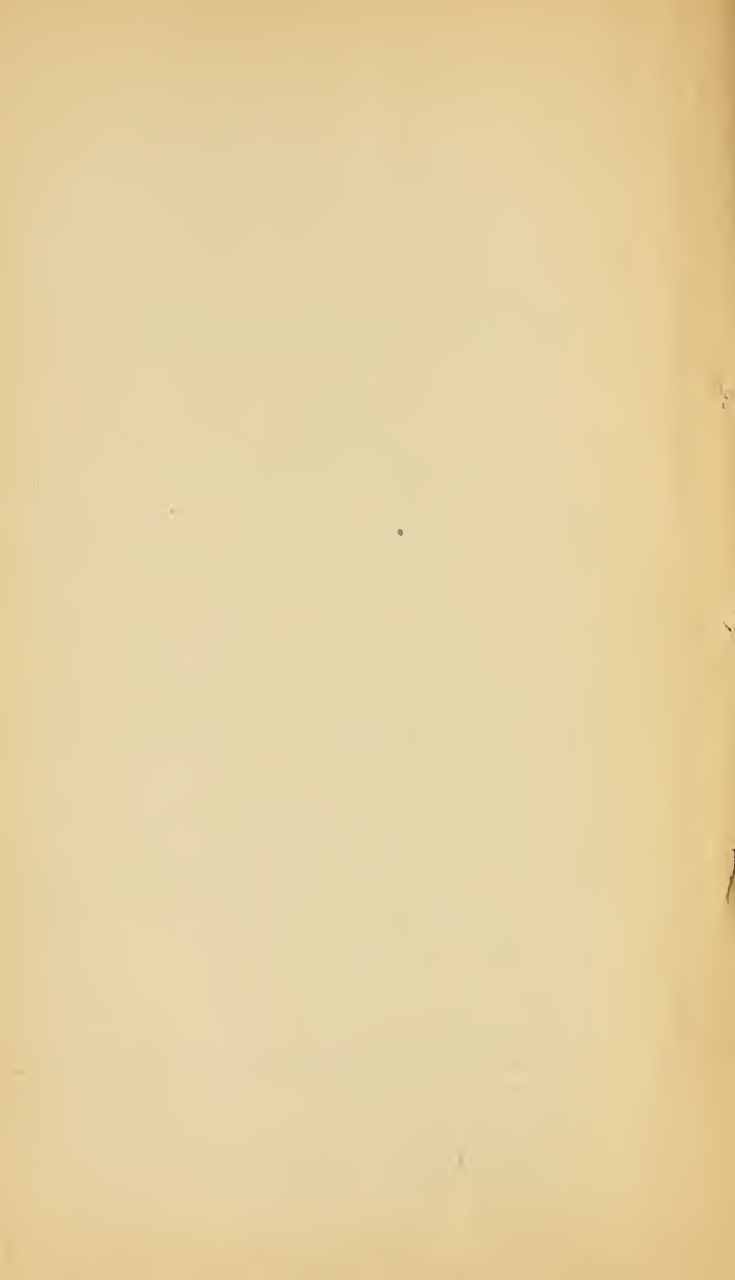
ROG. Pish! pish!—

EDW. For a more unsociable, gruesome, duller-witted fellow—(*ROGER takes a bottle from his pocket and proceeds to uncork it*) but an honest fellow is often hid under a rough skin.

ROG. (*Drinking*) Eh?

EDW. A good heart goes with a blunt tongue. (*shivering*) Comrade, it is as cold as if we were in Scotland. (*ROGER smacks his lips and corks the bottle*) As I am thy friend I will share thy bottle.

ROG. Friend? Hm! Hm!



EDW. Yes—friend!—none but a friend would ask to share thy bottle. Friendship must have something to live on, comrade—because I am thy friend I will drink thy liquor.

ROG. If it would close thy mouth awhile—

EDW. I will keep silent a full ten minutes. (*Takes bottle and drinks—pats it*) There is more joy and more grief, in a bottle of good liquor, than in a King's palace—for if you drink but enough, you can think yourself an emperor, and if you guzzle too much you get kicked like a dog for your pains. Ah me! I wish these wars were well over, and I with some snug little wife keeping a tavern at Cheapside—but attention!—comrade!—(*Puts bottle in his pocket*) I hear footsteps—

ROG. My bottle!—

EDW. Nay, it might get so sober a man into trouble to be found on watch with a bottle.

Enter SIR BALDWIN DE BETHUNE and SIR WALTER DE L'ESTAING, L.

ROG. (*In low voice—to EDWARD*) Come now! (*EDWARD takes a sly drink*)

SIR BALD. (*Pointing to the flag on the walls*)

It grows to morning and the flag still floats;
Messina sleeps as quiet beneath its folds
As though the lions, with their lifted paws,
Were her own watch-dogs.

(*Through the following conversation EDWARD frequently drinks—showing bottle each time to ROGER.*)

SIR WAL. If the duke should bear
This insult—

SIR BALD. He will not—sooner the sea
Would smooth her folds before the northern blast
Than Leopold brook this.

SIR WAL. It is then true
That Leopold loves Berengaria?

SIR BALD. It is—and he would gladly find a cause
To break with Richard—Richard laughs at him
Mocks him, outshines him in all deeds of arms,
Is King where he is duke and—

(*EDWARD, having emptied the bottle sticks it into ROGER'S pocket. SIR BALDWIN sees it.*)

Hallo there! what does this mean?

ROG. 'Tis empty.

SIR BALD. Hast thou not heard the King's edict against robbing and pillaging? We shall have to hang a few of you rascals to cure you of the habit.

ROG. (*Pointing to EDWARD*) He drank the half of it.

EDW. Now is that good fellowship? But I trust there's no question of hanging about a poor small bottle of liquor.

SIR BALD. Give me the bottle. (*Puts the bottle to his mouth and turns it up*) It is as empty as Richard's purse—greedy knaves!—to drink all on so cold a morning.

EDW. King Richard will soon give us a chance to fill it again, I trust; broken heads and full bottles are always to be found in his service.

SIR WAL. (*Shading his eyes and looking out to sea, L*)
My lord, I fancy I can see a sail
Blowing toward Messina.



SIR BALD. Well, thy eyes
Are younger by some forty years than mine—
But, (*looking out*) by the cross, I see it too—now ends
Our long suspense—for once the princess here
Richard will start for Palestine—But hark!

(*Trumpets blow from the town*)

The trumpets of the Austrian—Perchance
He comes to look upon the flag himself.

Enter L., gentlemen of the English camp.

Good morrow, gentlemen; the King still sleeps—
(*Pointing to sea L.*)

But see the ship that hails this way, and brings
An end to our long waiting.

EDW. (*To ROGER*) Dost thou hear
Old surliness!

ROG. A fig for all the princesses!

EDW. Be not unreasonable, man—princesses mean weddings, and
wedding feasts—and I love a good feast above all things.

*Trumpets blow from the town—enter from gates, R., several AUSTRIAN
GENTLEMEN.*

FIRST AUS. Baldwin de Bethune—

SIR BALD. Greeting to you, sir.

FIRST AUS. I pray thee lead me to the King.

SIR BALD. The King

Still sleeps.

FIRST AUS. My master's cause is urgent, sir,

And cannot stand on ceremony—pray

Let the King know that Leopold of Austria

Sends me on pressing business

SIR BALD. Nay, sir—nay—

I'll not stir Richard for a score of dukes—

He is no sluggard—when the sun is up

He too will rise, till then, sirs, lack-a-day,

I fear that you must wait his Royal pleasure.

FIRST AUS. "Like man like dog"—your English proverb holds,
Sir Baldwin.

SIR BALD. And my English lance holds too;

If you should care to test it sir, I am

Most humbly at your service.

SIR WAL. Nay, Sir Baldwin,
The gentleman acts as ambassador.

SIR BALD. True, true—well sir, your business—we can bear
Your message to the King, if you'll not wait.

FIRST AUS. Briefly then—Leopold of Austria sends

To Richard and demands that Richard's flag

Be taken from Messina's walls—because

Leopold makes his camp within the town,

Richard without it—each is sovereign

Of his own camp—to place the English flag

On Austrian walls insults the duke—therefore

He does demand of you its swift removal.

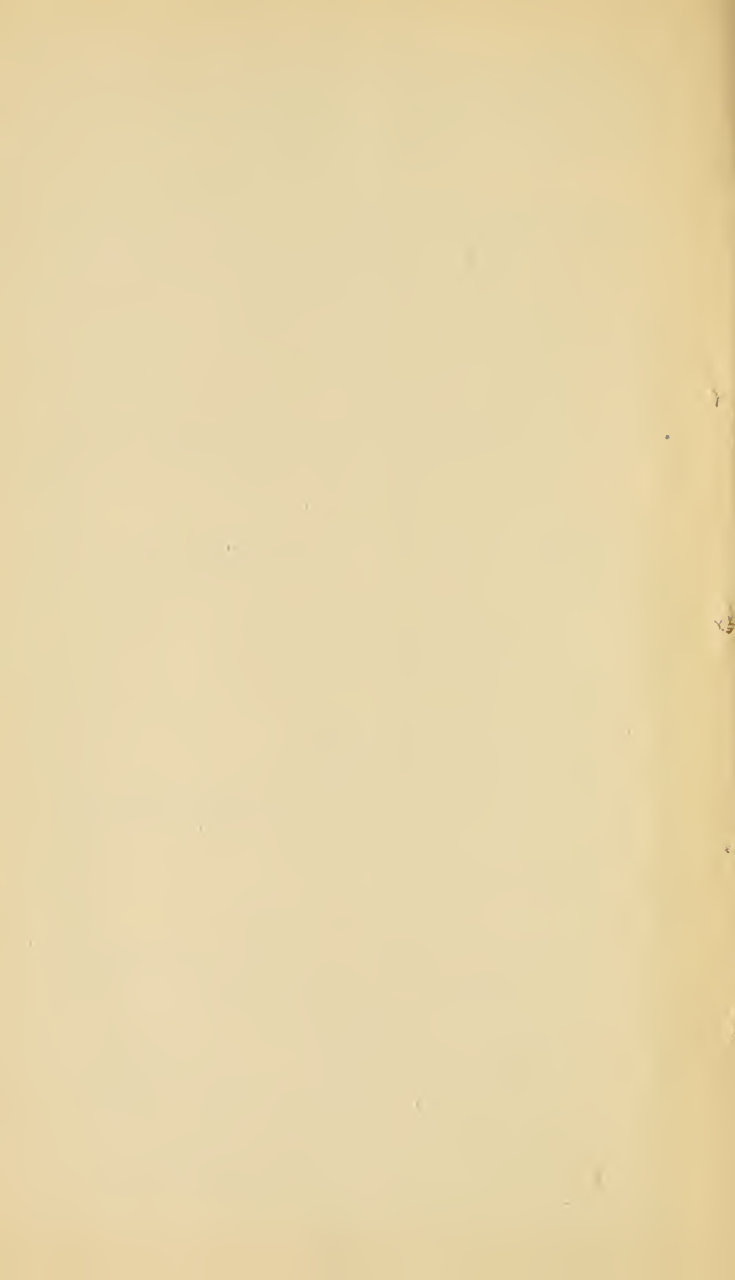
SIR BALD. Nay, sir—King Richard placed it there himself—

With no thought of the duke though—but because

The townspeople, who dwell in the *Austrian camps*,

Grew turbulent—refused to sell us meat,

To furnish us with water, hay and straw—



Assailed the peaceful agents whom we sent—
 Hustled them out of the gates—till Richard flew
 Into a furious rage, and charged the crowd,
 Driving them back like sheep—then on the walls
 He set his flag—with no thought of the duke,
 For certainly the duke could have no hand
 In such ungracious conduct to his *friend*.

FIRST AUS. Of all your townsfolk quarrels I know naught,
 I have my master's orders—will you take
 The flag away?

SIR BALD. It is the King's affair.

FIRST AUS. (*To the other Austrians—pointing to the flag*)
 Then tear it down—(*To SIR BALDWIN*)
 You force me to this—

The opening of the tent is suddenly thrown aside—RICHARD appears—advances a step or two and leans on his two-handed sword.

RICHARD. Halt!

Who says tear down my flag? (*All keep silence*)
 Lay but a hand

On yonder banner, and I promise you
 That blood shall run to color me another—
 What? Leopold tear down my flag?—forsooth!
 These Austrians grow great. (*Advances c f.*)

FIRST AUS. Sire, I have come—

RICH. I heard you, sir—I heard you—get you back;
 Say to the duke that Richard sets his flag
 Where the whim seizes him!

FIRST AUS. Sire—

RICH. No more sir—go!—

Exit AUSTRIANS by gates to R. RICHARD walks to R. F. EDWARD and ROGER remain by the tent. ENGLISH GENTLEMEN L. F. SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER C. look joyously out to sea L. It grows to broad daylight.

RICH. I trust my lords that you enjoy your mirth;
 Laugh you at Leopold or me?

SIR BALD. Nay, sire,

We laugh to see yon ship that cleaves the waves
 Toward Messina. (*RICHARD runs to c.—looks out to sea—shading his eyes*)

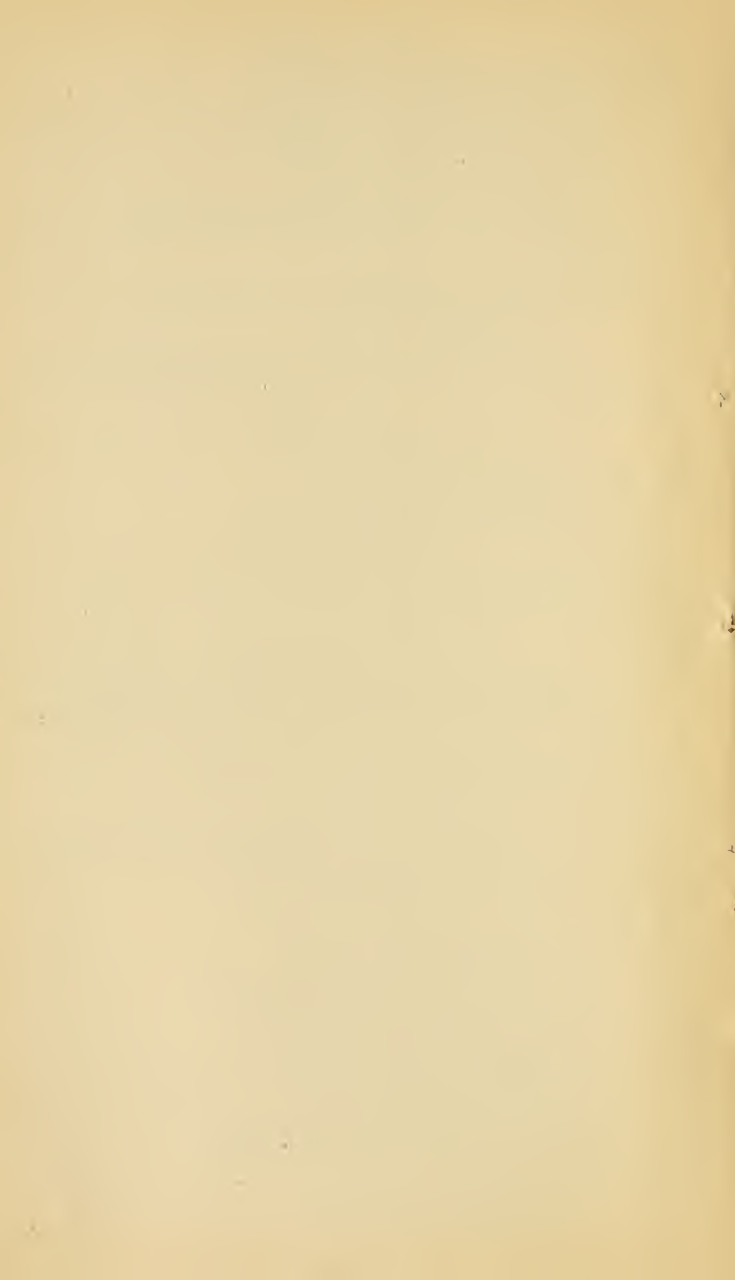
RICH. Now the saints be praised!
 Sweet Berengaria cometh with the dawn;
 An omen full of promise.

SIR WAL. Truly, sire,

Your princess must be passing fair to merit
 Such long delay—your love is most devoted.

RICH. Fair?—She is rosier than the kindling morn,
 As lithe and lissome as the fleet-foot roe—
 And for her face—a broad white brow, that wears
 A crown of lustrous hair—a mouth so curved,
 That dimples play on either side, and lurk
 In the round chin—a nose not long nor short,
 Nor yet too thin, but of a royal grace—
 And eyes that lure you with their long sweet gaze
 Beneath fine lashes.

SIR BALD. Truly, sire, no wonder
 That Leopold harbors a grudge against you.



RICH. She comes ! She comes !

Faint music A ship sails in from L., and moors e., behind the landing.

BERENGARIA appears on deck with ladies in waiting. RICHARD runs up the steps of the landing and escorts BERENGARIA down them—kneels and kisses her hand. The ladies follow—sailors are seen on the ship.

RICH. Ah, cousin—welcome ! welcome ! (*rises*)

I and my army wait for thee, my love.

BER. Dear sire, the winds were strong against us.

RICH. Yes—

I know ; but wind nor wave could part us long.

Baldwin, call Blondel here, while I may sit

And feast my eyes upon my lady's face.

Exit SIR BALDWIN L. *Servants throw a scarlet tapestry over the seats of the landing.* BERENGARIA sits on the third step—RICHARD on the second R., enter SIR BALDWIN and BLONDEL with lute.

RICH. Dear love—the sweetest minstrel of the world,
Blondel de Nesle—sing to us Blondel—ah !—

BLON. (*Sings, accompanied by lute*)

When the west wind blows,
And the red, red rose

Loseth her petals one by one—

And the wan stream flows

Where no flower grows,

Far from the moonlight and the sun.

Then I kiss my love,

And her silken glove

Fix in my helm and ride away—

And the brooding dove

Cooeth soft above,

Thrilling with grief the distance gray.

But the skies will change,

And the level range

Buries not always sun and moon—

In my lady's grange

I shall ne'er be strange—

Watching she waits from night to noon.

RICHARD makes a signal of dismissal. *Exeunt all but RICHARD and BERENGARIA, L.* RICHARD hums last line of the song.

RICH. Sweet cousin, I have waited here for thee,
Patient and true as Blondel's lady-love.

BER. Sire—

RICH. Nay, forget love, that I am a King.

BER. My Richard ! I have dreamed of thee so long
It seems not strange to be with thee—and yet—

RICH. And yet ?

BER. And yet—I cannot think it true.

RICH. Nay, love, 'tis very true—here is Messina,
Yonder the English army—there the fleet—
And in the town duke Leopold—

BER. (*Starting*) He here ?—

RICH. Why, how you start, love, at his very name.
Tell me, my Berengaria, is it true
That Leopold paid suit to thee?

BER. Indeed
He made most violent love.

RICH. Ah ha! the duke
Hath cause indeed to hate me—were I he
I'd mope as sullen as an owl by day,
And croak all night like some disgruntled toad,
To lose thee?—why 'twere better far to lose
A score of battles. *(Rises)*

Cousin, tell me now,
Wilt thou with glad heart be a soldier's bride?
March in the morning at the beat of drum?
Toil on through wastes and sands and burning plains,
Till sunset bid the weary host to camp?—
And then instead of downy bed, thou'lt lie
Beneath some windy tent—no perfumed lamps
To make a dim, sweet light for drowsy eyes;
But flaring watch-fires reddening the fields,
Or smouldering embers of some ruined town—
And all night long the cries of sentinels
To trouble sleep—and overhead the stars!

BER. Ah Richard! I can brave it all for thee—
Have I not sailed far from my father's home
To meet thee in this distant, stranger isle?

RICH. *(Walks up and down excitedly)*
And when thou sittest in thy sheltered tent,
Helpless and weak—and round thee rolls the roar
Of battle—while the gray wing'd arrows whizz,
And swords and lances clash with clamorous shock—
And I far from thee—doing, daring all!
Drunken with fight—forgetting all but war—
For when the battle rages I am lost
To all but battle—Canst thou meekly sit
Nor shed too many tears, nor swoon with fright,
But bravely wait the combat's end and sing
A song of triumph when thy lord returns
Victorious?—for so must Richard's bride.

BER. Yes—sire! and when by luckless chance defeat—

RICH. Defeat?—whene'er that sombre day shall dawn
'Twill be my last—I cannot brook defeat;
But cheer thee, love—there's no defeat for us,
We wage war in a holy cause—the pope
Hath bless'd us, and the Holy Sepulchre
Shall be our own, and Christendom made glad—
But am I not a most ungracious wooer?
Love should not heed of wars or politics.
But, cousin dear, our Kingship brings it's cares,
I cannot make thy life the pretty poem
I would if I were some gay troubadour
Like Blor'del. *(Trumpets blow from the town.)*

BER. Hark! the trumpets from the town.



RICH. Leopold comes to tear down Richard's flag—
He'll find the task a rough one—(calls)

Gentlemen!

Enter L., SIR BALDWIN, SIR WALTER, EDWARD, ROGER, BLONDEL and
ENGLISH GENTLEMEN of the camp.

RICH. What say you, gentlemen, shall the flag fly?
Or shall we yield to Austria's demand?

ALL. Hurrah for the flag!

Enter from gates R., LEOPOLD followed by AUSTRIAN GENTLEMEN.

LEOPOLD approaches RICHARD.

LEO. Your grace of England!

RICH. Good morrow, my lord duke. (LEOPOLD sees BERENGARIA,)

LEO. Berengaria!—

RICH. My lord—my future queen.

LEO. So I have heard, sire.

BER. Welcome, Leopold. (Gives him her hand—
he kisses it.)

LEO. Sire, I am loath to break so sweet a scene
With my rude errand—but I crave your pardon,
The business will not wait. (RICHARD and LEOPOLD, c. f.)

RICH. My lord, I listen.

LEO. This town, sire, is my camp, I bivouac
Within its walls, waiting for you to start
For Palestine—

RICH. You'll not wait long for me.

LEO. You, sire, have set your flag upon my walls,
A gross and wanton insult to a friend—

RICH. Insult?

LEO. A moment, sire—I must demand
Its prompt removal—else—(hesitates)

RICH. Well, my lord duke?

LEO. Or else I'll tear it down.

RICH. You hear it, sirs!

This flag that I have set here—not in sign
Of any quarrel with my lord of Austria—
But as a warning to the townfolk, fond
Of fighting with the peaceful agents sent
To buy provisions—this fair flag of England
My lord of Austria will tear down—forsooth
I give him leave to do it if he can.

LEO. Then you'll not take it down?

RICH. No!

LEO. (To the Austrians) To the walls!
Tear down the flag!

(RICHARD runs to wall and stands below flag with drawn sword. The
Austrians do not dare attack him. The ENGLISHMEN run towards him.)

RICH. (To the ENGLISHMEN)

Stand back, my lords—stand back—Richard can guard
His lions. (LEOPOLD draws sword and faces RICHARD)

LEO. Cowards!—We shall fight alone.

(BERENGARIA approaches RICHARD)

BER. Ah, sire! you put in peril the Holy Cause,
If such dissension rend the chiefs, what good
Can come of your great enterprize?

SIR BALD. (*To RICHARD*) I' faith
There is much reason in the lady's words
And after all the Austrian has some right.

RICH. Right ?

SIR BALD. (*Stoutly*) 'Tis his camp.

RICH. And truly 'tis my flag.

BER. Sire, in the name of peace—of the Holy Cause—
Be generous to the duke..

RICH. (*After a moment's reflection*) She's right--she's right--
I'm but a headstrong, helpless fool--(*To LEOPOLD*)

My lord

Although I am not willing that your men
Tear down my flag, yet I will yield to you;
No hand but Richard's lowers Richard's flag—

He takes down the flag gives it to SIR BALDWIN)

My lord of Austria your town is clear,
Let there be peace between us. (*LEOPOLD bows*)

Now, my lords,

My bride is here—the long delay is o'er;
Saladin gathers armies in the East
Hoping to crush us by mere force of numbers;
But we—relying on our sacred Cause,
Shall triumph and the sepulchre be saved.
The wind is fair—let us our journey take
And sail for Cyprus. (*To BERENGARIA*)

There we will be wed.

LEO. My army, sire, is ready, France's too.

RICH. Then beat the call--break camp and sail for Cyprus.

*Drums—trumpets—RICHARD ascends the landing with BERENGARIA, they
turn and face audience.*

RICH. The eyes of the world are turned toward the East
Where the pale crescent fronts the golden cross;
The holy shrine of Christendom is held
By infidels—be ours the sacred task
To rend it from their hands--Glory and faith
Call to the combat—so, my lords, for Cyprus!

Drums—trumpets—above which rises the air of "O Richard! O mon Roi!"

CURTAIN.



ACT II.

THE SIEGE OF ACRE.

SCENE—*An eminence within sight of Acre. Practicable rocks rising up stage, the highest point being reached at c. 3d groove with abrupt descent beyond, invisible to audience. Stage interspersed with palms and eastern plants.*

TIME—*Late morning.*

Enter L., with rising of curtain, SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER.

SIR BALD. To-day the last assault is to be made;
And Richard lies as helpless in his tent
As any girl

SIR WAL. The enemy is strong.

SIR BALD. Too strong I fear.

SIR WAL. The queen is sick with watching.

Enter BLONDEL L.

SIR BALD. Ha Blondel! any news?

BLON. No change, my lords—

The fever burns him yet.

SIR WAL. Some rumors ran
Of snows that Saladin had sent him—snows
Brought from yon mountains, which ascend so high
That winter dwells perpetual on their peaks—
Do you know about it, Blondel?

BLON. It is true;

The King without them must have surely died.

SIR BALD. There is some good then in the Saracen.

BLON. A royal soul—for once King Richard dead,
We all know how these hosts would melt away,
And Saladin be left unquestioned lord
Of Asia.

SIR WAL. Faiths and creeds may differ, sirs,
But good hearts are the same the wide world over.
I love the Saracen for this.

Enter R. 2 E., EDWARD and ROGER.

Hallo!

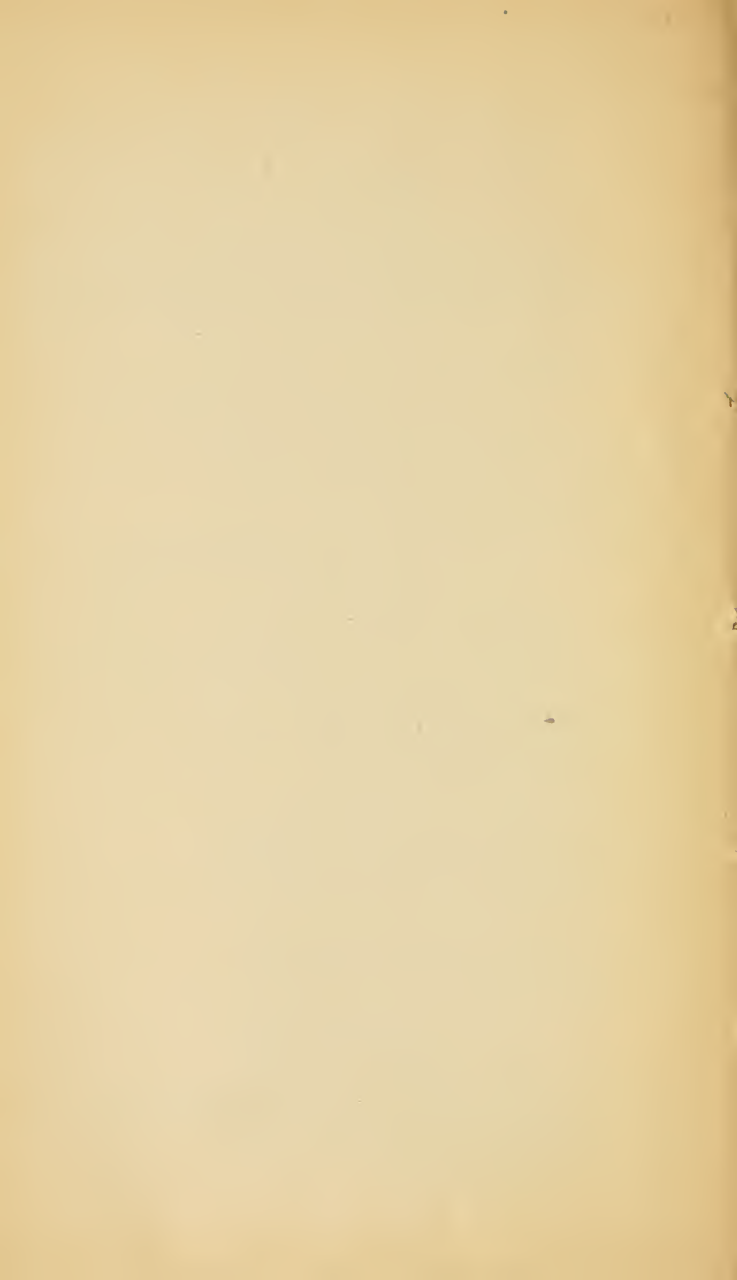
Our old friends of the bottle.

EDW. An' it please you, my lords, will there be fighting to-day?

SIR BALD. Small doubt of that.

EDW. And will King Richard be with us again?

SIR BALD. Small chance of that.



EDW. Then I tell you—not for myself or my comrade—for we are both true men, and will fight to the last scratch—eh—Roger?—

ROG. Hm! Hm!

EDW. He is slow of speech, my lords, but hard of fist—as I learned quite lately regarding a certain bottle of liquor you—

SIR BALD. (*Interrupting*) Well! well! But what of King Richard?

EDW. Just this—The Austrians are mixing among our men with tales that Richard is dead—and his great two-handed sword broken—and they do say that his ghost walked the fields all last night.

SIR BALD. This smacks of the duke.

EDW. And unless King Richard leads the charge to-day, there will be many of our men turn tail and run.

ROG. The gossip tells the truth. He thinks he saw the ghost himself.

EDW. I? Ah! beggarly comrade! I will never fly because of a ghost that can neither eat nor drink. But truly, I saw a shape much like the King.

SIR BALD. Where wert thou?

EDW. Roger and I cracked a bottle last night, and when our blood was well warmed we slept—Waking at the stroke of midnight, I saw the ghost steal by.

SIR WAL. All the spirits you saw, comrade, were blood cousins of the villainous spirits you consumed.

SIR BALD. Blondel—lead these two fellows to the King. Let them look at him for a moment, even if he throws his sword at them—and then, sirrahs, you can tell in the camp that you have seen King Richard. I warrant he will receive you warmly enough.

Exeunt L., BLONDEL, EDWARD and ROGER.

SIR BALD. So Leopold is working our defeat.

SIR WAL. He's mad in love with Berengaria—
A wicked love drives honor from men's hearts,
And makes them ready tools for villainy.

SIR BALD. I care not why or wherefore—if the duke
Play false with Richard lying sick to death
Let him beware—

SIR WAL. He fights most valorously
To all appearances.

Enter LEOPOLD R. 2 E.

LEO. Good morning, gentlemen—
How is our cousin Richard?

SIR BALD. Sick-a-bed,
Burning with fever

LEO. Then there is no change?

SIR BALD. But for the faithful watching of the queen
Ere this he would have died.

LEO. I grieve for him.

SIR BALD. And I for this day's fighting sadly grieve.

LEO. Then, sirs, I must again assume command—
Sir Baldwin you will lead the first assault
Against the breach we opened yesterday—
To you, Sir Walter, I entrust the task



Of forcing entrance by the Prophet's Gate—

Perilous work—but full of honor, sirs.

I have already disposed the Austrian forces.

SIR BALD. If, my lord duke, we fail again to-day,

Were it not best to draw away awhile,

Till Richard be the better of his fever?

SIR WAL. For if the King should die, and the poor queen—(*Stops embarrassed.*)

LEO. What of the queen, sir?

SIR WAL. Left without protector—

LEO. Not quite defenceless, sirs, while Leopold

Carries a sword—in any case the queen

Shall be well cared for. Sound the charge, my lords.

SIR BALD. (*To SIR WAL*)

Ah! if the King could only show himself.

Exeunt SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER, R 2 E.

LEO. (*C. F.*)

I count on this day's work to clear my path

Of Richard—for if fever does not kill him

Saladin soon will seize him in his tent

And I will fly with Berengaria. (*Paces up and down uneasily*)

O love!—love!—love!—thou art a very poison

Turning me traitor. All my thoughts are foul

With treachery to Richard—and desire

For Berengaria. Morn and noon and night

I think of her—I dream of her—I grow

Faint with long waiting—Ah! She is so fair—

(Muses a moment—then bitterly)

To win her I have sold my Christian faith

And trafficked with the Saracen—my word

Is pledged to thwart the purpose of our wars,

And Richard's sickness plays into my hands.

Ah God! this love that lifts men to such heights

Of faith and honor—when the tides are turned

Can drag them to the deepest deep abyss

Of infamy!

Enter EDWARD and ROGER. Very much excited.

EDW. (*Shouts*) Long live King Richard!

ROG. (*Shouts*) Long live the King!

LEO. (*Aside*) These are Englishmen. (*To EDWARD and ROGER*)

“Long live the King,” with all my heart, friends—but it is rumored that Richard is dead. I myself have tried to see him in vain, and I hear the queen weeping as if her heart would break—but do not tell your comrades of this, or they would lose courage, and that were ruin indeed.

EDW. It is true, your grace, that we heard the same news this morning—and the courage oozed out of us, like the tallow from a burning candle.

LEO. What—have the news spread so fast? Then why do you brawl about shouting ‘Long live the King!’

EDW. Ah, your grace, gossip is a bolder liar than Satan himself—and Satan is no small liar, as all men know—

ROG. Pish! pish! gossip!—We have seen King Richard.

EDW. This beggarly fellow, your grace, will take the word from a man's mouth as neatly as the bottle from his pocket—and both are scurvy tricks. But he says true—we have seen the King and he is—

LEO. Whom do you serve under?

EDW. Baldwin de Bethune, as worthy a—

LEO. De Bethune's forces are moving—it is too late for you to join him—remain here! (*Aside*) These fellows must not spread their news—they might spoil all yet.

EDW. But, your grace, here there are no rich purses to get—no rare bottles to crack—no pretty lips to kiss—no heads to break. Besides—the King gave us a message for Sir Baldwin.

LEO. What is it?

EDW. Truly this—(*ROGER slaps his hand over EDWARD's mouth, pushing him backward.*)

ROG. Fool!—(*To LEOPOLD*) He bade us tell it to no one but Sir Baldwin.

EDW. (*Rubbing his mouth*) That is very true—the churl has wit.

LEO. (*Throws a purse down before EDWARD*) Tell me the message. Thou'lt not be able to find Sir Baldwin this day.

EDW. (*Looks longingly at purse*) Nay, your grace, he specially said Sir Baldwin.

LEO. Tell it me—quick!—(*Drums—trumpets*) They begin the attack.

EDW. Nay, I'll not. A poor man's honor is as good as any duke's—and I'll not soil mine. Moreover, Richard's arms are long.

ROG. (*Approvingly*) Hm! Hm!—

LEOPOLD draws his sword—threatens EDWARD.

LEO. Now, curse you, I have dallied long enough—what said the King?

Enter four soldiers L., bearing a litter covered with a scarlet robe on which

RICHARD lies. BLONDEL and BERENGARIA follow.

EDW. The King!

LEO. Ha! he is come!—

RICH. Stay!—

The soldiers put down litter, c. f., and retire up stage—BLONDEL stands behind litter—BERENGARIA kneels in front of it. RICHARD supports himself on his elbow—he is haggard and emaciated. LEOPOLD L. F.

EDWARD and ROGER R. F.

RICH. My lord duke, you see I am not dead.

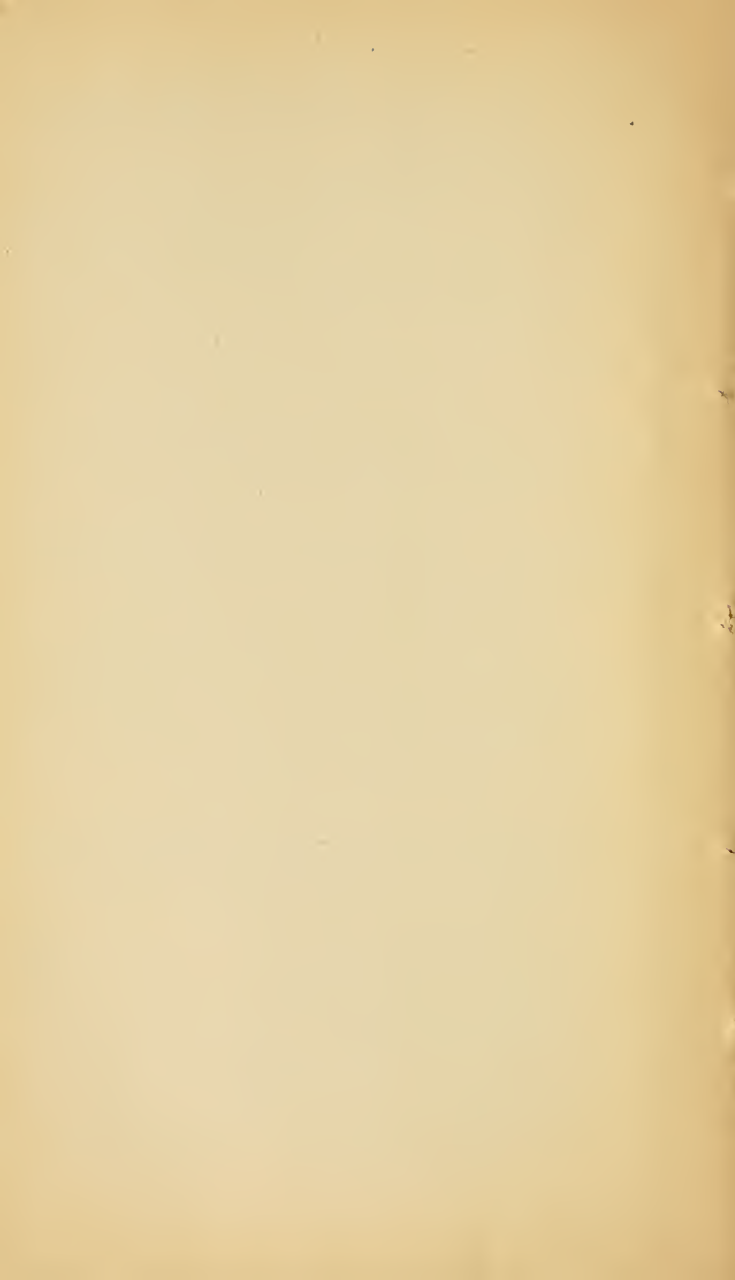
BER. (*Is very pale and exhausted*)

Richard—'Tis madness thus to play with death,
You should be sleeping in some cool, quiet place,
Not breathing in this hot and humid air
That will recall the fever—Come with me
Back to thy tent.

RICH. (*To LEOPOLD*) My lord, how goes the siege?

LEO. The assault begins.

Drums, trumpets, and sounds of conflict heard through ensuing scenes.



RICH. (*Points to rock*) Blondel, stand on that rock
And make report of what you see.

BLONDEL *climbs the rock.* RICHARD *sees EDWARD and ROGER, continues.*
How now?

Why do you loiter here?

EDW. The duke so bade.

RICH. And I commanded you to join the ranks—
What! am I disobeyed?

EDW. But, sire—the duke—

RICH. Run—run—and spread the news that Richard's out
And on the field!

EDW. *and ROG. (Run off R. 2 E. shouting)*
Long live the King—Long live—
(*Their voices die away*)

RICH. By what authority, my lord, did you
Rescind my orders?

LEO. Sire, I thought you sick—
Not knowing the state of battle—and I gave
Such orders as seemed proper.

RICH. Blondel!—

BLON. (*From rock*) Sire?

RICH. Do you see naught?—

BLON. The fight is not begun.

RICH. (*Very impatiently to LEOPOLD*)
And why are you not on the field, my lord?

LEO. The last two days have sadly gone against us;
If the assault should fail to-day, we must
Retreat—I wait the outcome of the fight,
So that the army may not lack a leader.

RICH. 'Tis not my fashion, but perhaps 'tis well.

(*Sinks back exhausted*)

BER. Sire—will you not return?

RICH. Nay, love—the fever
Seems to relax its hold on me—I'll wait
The end of the attack.

As he continues BERENGARIA falls asleep, her head on the litter. RICHARD strokes her hair.

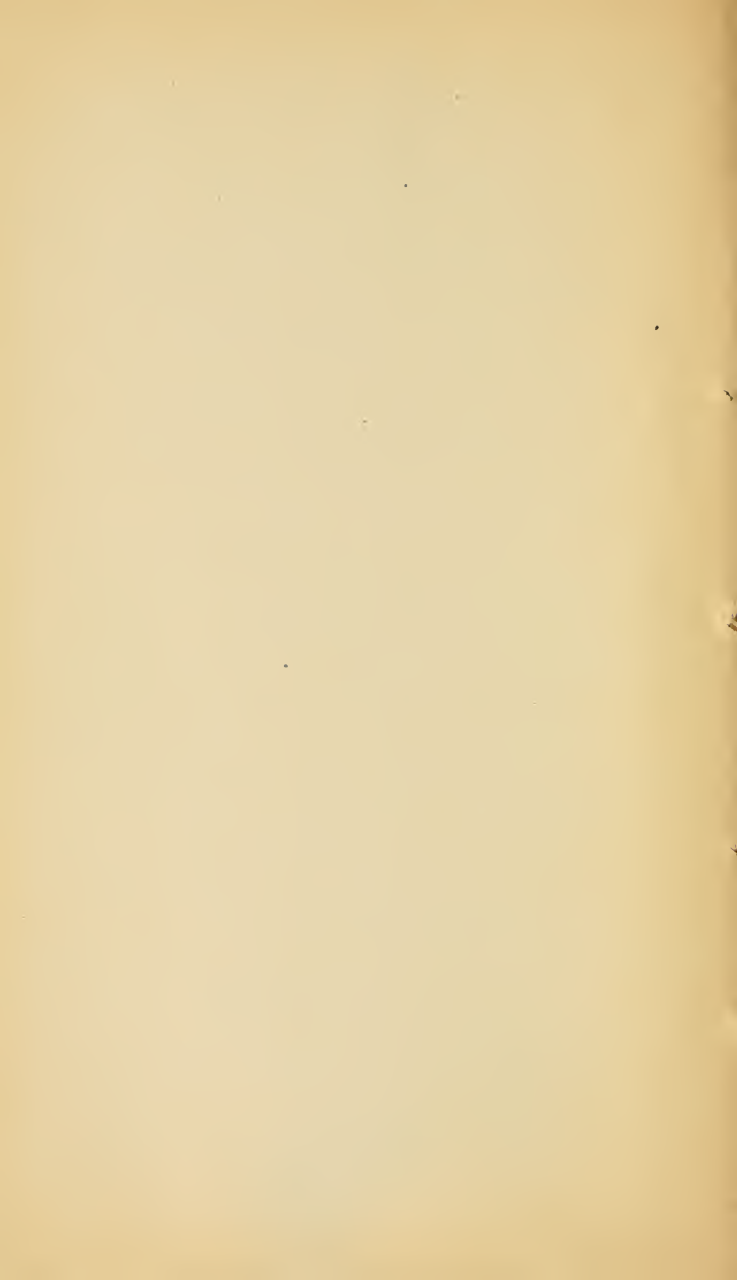
My dearest love!

Thou art so worn with watching by my side—
I grieve to see thy pale and hollow cheeks,
And poor dim eyes.

LEO. The queen hath nursed thee, sire?

RICH. She was my wife—she has become my mother
By virtue of the second life she gives me—
But for her loving, patient, tender, care,
Ere this I should have passed the narrow gates
To track the wan wastes of the realm beyond.
Poor little one, how thin she is—how thin.

A moment of silence. BLONDEL cries suddenly from the rock.



BLON. They storm the walls!

RICH. (*Rising impetuously*) Who leads? (*His movement wakes BERENGARIA*)

BLON. Baldwin de Bethune
Batters the breach—De l' Estaing's at the gates—
The Austrians support them (*RICHARD falls back*)

RICH. O cursed weakness!

BLON. Baldwin is down—a score of Saracens
Are on him—

RICH. Ah!—

BLON. He gains another horse.
Saints! how he fights—the Templars join him—Ah!
They're through the breach—De l' Estaing pushes back,
He is outnumbered ten to one.

RICH. The breach!

BLON. I cannot see Sir Baldwin, but his troops
Press onward—

RICH. Good!

BLON. De l'Estaing still retreats—

(*He is silent, a moment—then points R.*)

From yonder rock we could observe the gate.

RICHARD *signals—the four soldiers, who have remained up stage, come forward*)

RICH. (*Points R.*)

Quick! Carry me to yonder rock.

BER. (*Clinging to him*) No! No!

RICH. Leopold, gather all the forces left
And reinforce De l' Estaing—he must hold
Or Baldwin's breach is useless—quick, now—quick!
Blondel—stay with the queen.

RICHARD *roughly puts away BERENGARIA—Execut soldiers carrying RICHARD on litter R. 2 E.* BERENGARIA *rises.*

BER. Nay, Blondel—go!

I will not trust him with a soul but you—
You know his sickness—watch him carefully—(*Pushing him to R.*)
Go! I will stay here—if the day goes ill
Bring back the King—Go!—I will wait him here.

Exit BLONDEL R. 2 E. BERENGARIA *stands looking out R. 2 E.*

LEO. Now shall this spectre thwart my dearest hopes?
The sight of him will make the mad fools fight
As if the fiend were in them—shall I go?—
Or wait—and—(*approaches BERENGARIA*)

Ah! sweet cousin?

BERENGARIA *starts—regards him haughtily.*

BER.

You, sir—here?—

Did not you hear the King's command?

LEO.

The King

Knows not how strong the tide is turned against us—
I must remain to shield retreat—and *now*
To serve as *your protector.*

BER. (*Coming C. F.*) You do wrong,
The King is chief—you owe him loyal obedience—
I pray you, sir, to go—to cross him now
Perhaps would cost his life

LEO. (*Coming by her side*) And if it should?—

BER. My lord?—

LEO. (*Passionately*) I am not made of ice or steel,
My heart can ache, my soul grow sick with pain—
The year just passed has been for me an age
Of torture—in the camp or on the field,
Richard has flung me insult—scorn—contempt—
The glory of this enterprise is his—
The labor and obscurity are mine—
And if I have endured with silent lips,
And if I have refrained from swift retort—
And left my good sword idle in my sheath,
My gauntlet dangling cowardly at my belt—
'Tis but for one thing—one sad, sweet, sharp cause
I love you—love—

BER. (*Interrupting*) Enough sir!—you forget
That I am Richard's wife!

LEO. Forget—Ah God!
Could I forget—could I but dream again,
And dream you were the laughing, lissome girl
Who ran with me along the sunny slopes
And vineyards of Navarre—O happy days!
Then we were young and both our souls pure white—
You were as virgin as the skies of dawn
And I would watch you hour after hour,
And wait on you to hear your maiden lips
Building a pretty fortune for us both—

BER. My lord, you frighten me—I will not hear
Another word—go sir, and join the fight—
The Holy Cause may wean you from your sin.

LEO. (*Catches her by the wrist*)
All this was changed by Richard—Richard came—
And Leopold was but a sorry duke
Before the splendor of the King to be.
He laughed—I sulked—he played a careless part,
Ran with the hounds and tilted at the jousts,
While I hung near you, greedy for a look—
He left you lightly and the years passed by—
You cared no more for me—but when he sent,
As one does for a servant, swift you ran
And found him at Messina.

BER. Are you mad?
Why all this talk of things so long gone by?

LEO. Because—*I love you—*

BER. (*Tearing herself from him*) Coward! you insult
King Richard's wife when Richard is away—

LEO. Ah?—

BER. It is true I followed him afar—
And I would follow him clear to the end
Of the broad world—I never loved but him,
My lover and my husband—

(A great clamor is heard.)

Hark!

LEO. (*Runs up the rock—looks*) They fly!

Comes down stage to BERENGARIA.

Come, Berengaria, come with me—they fly!

BER. They fly! O now all saints watch over him!

LEO. There is no time for prayer—we must away,
Or Saladin's troops will soon be on us.

BER. No!

I must wait here—Richard is close at hand.

LEO. 'Tis sheerest folly—Richard's lords will take
Good care of him—come, cousin—we must fly,
The time is slipping fast.

Noises of the rout heard.

BER. Then fly, my lord,

But I shall stay—I am a queen—a wife—

I will not stir without my Richard—

LEO. (*Catching her by the waist.* Ah!

You must! Our time's too precious to be lost
In words.

He drags her towards L.

BER. Help! Help!

LEO. Be silent, pretty fool—

The Saracens are near.

BER. Help! Richard! Help!

ENTER *soldiers carrying RICHARD on litter—Catching sight of LEOPOLD, RICHARD jumps from litter and runs to L.; hurling LEOPOLD to C. F., he places his arm round BERENGARIA—*

ENTER R. 2 E., SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER, with several OFFICERS.
They run towards LEOPOLD.

RICH. What—Leopold!—Stand back, my lords, stand back—
I have stood between the Austrian and my flag,
And do not fear to guard my wife from him.

BER. But, sire, the rout begins—we must away!—

RICH. Why are you here, my lords, why are you here?
You should be in the thickest of the fight.

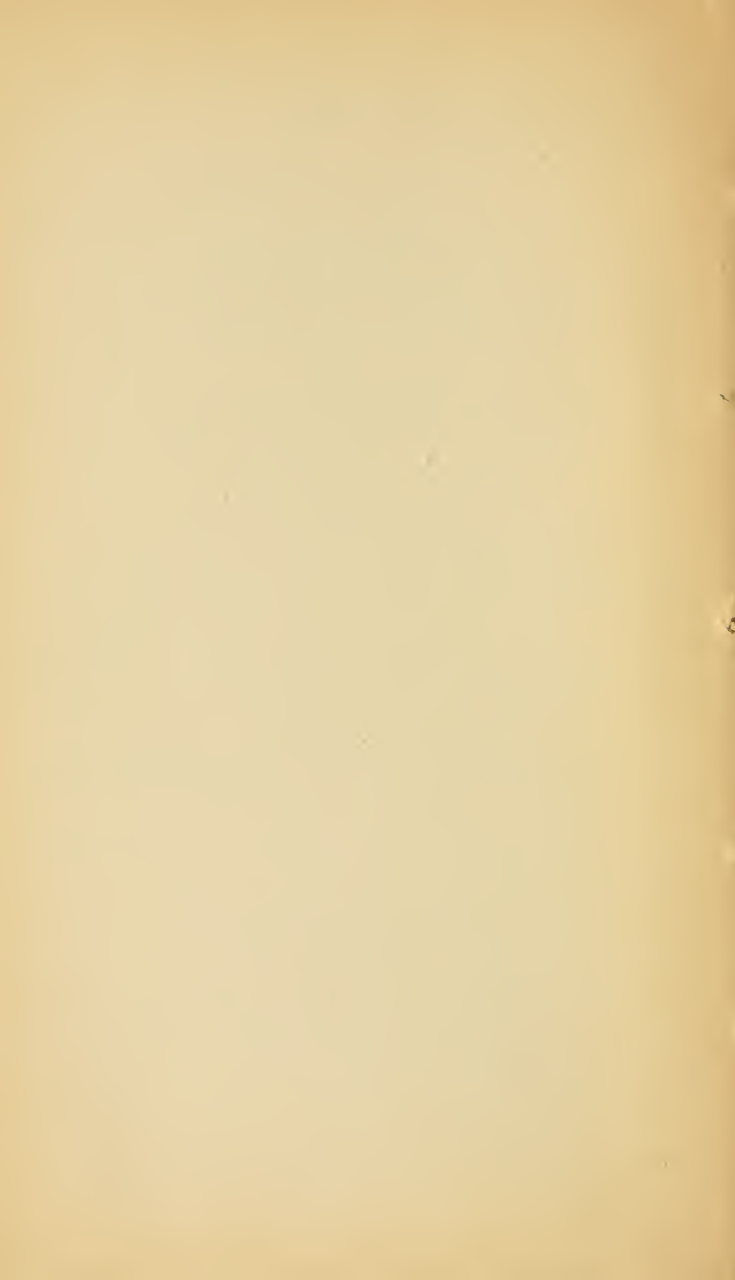
SIR BALD. We guard your person—without you all were lost.

RICH. And you, my lord of Austria, you have left
This army to be conquered—you have played
The coward?

LEO. (*As if rousing himself from a stupor*)

Coward?

RICH. Yes the coward! this
Shall vouch the word. (*Plucks a silk glove from his belt and flings it in
LEOPOLD'S face.*)



Now haste you while you can,
And help keep back this rout—or by the mass!
I will disknight you—there is time enough
To settle our private quarrel.

LEO. *Time enough*

Exit LEOPOLD R. 2 E.

SIR BALD. But, sire, permit us to remove you hence,
The fever will return

RICH. Remove me now?—

Through the following scene a terrible struggle of the will with physical weakness is observed.

De l'Estaing bring my armor.

Exit DE L'ESTAING L.

Now's the time

For all to do their best.

RE-ENTER DE L'ESTAING L., *with full suit of armor—helmet—and two-handed sword.* SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER arm RICHARD.

RICH. Ah! trusty steel!
Your merry click is music in my ears.
Stands full-armed—visor up.

The sun is scarcely past the mid-day hour,
There's time to fight another battle yet!
Sir Walter, stay with the queen—and Blondel too!
He left her once before—this day it seems
That all must disobey me.

The rout grows louder—RICHARD runs up the rock—shouts

Saints and fiends!

Turn back! turn back! and front the walls again—
Richard is coming—Richard!—

Great shouts arise of "Long live the King!"

RICH. Ah, Baldwin—see!—they turn—the day is ours,
The battle shouts again delight my ears—

To BERENGARIA.

Wait but a little, love, and we'll be back!

Turns, stands with profile to audience— he shouts

Richard and the Cross!

RICHARD jumps—SIR BALDWIN runs off R. 2 E.—SIR WALTER and BLONDEL support BERENGARIA—who weeps.

CURTAIN.

NOTE—Action at the end must be exceedingly rapid—Richard's jump and the fall of the curtain must be almost simultaneous.

ACT III.

IN THE TOILS!

SCENE.—*The public room of an inn at Vienna. Small door in flat, L. Large double-door R. 2 E. Fireplace L. Table C. F. Ceiling, furniture and all appurtenances of a strictly mediæval character.*

TIME.—*Evening.*

Discovered.—LANDLADY seated L. knitting—GRETCHEN, bustling about.—LEOPOLD, EDWARD, ROGER, FIRST and SECOND AUSTRIAN OFFICERS and six or seven roysterers seated at table, drinking. LEOPOLD disposes his cloak and hat so as to disguise himself.

Shouts and clinking of glasses as curtain rises.

ALL. A song! A song!

One of the company rises and sings:

Here's a health to thee, wine! ruddy wine!
Friend alike of the sage and the fool—
Sweeter far than the grape on the vine,
Is the wine from the cellar so cool.

Drain a glass to the red juice itself!
Was there ever a draught half as fine?
Drown your greed of renown or of pelf,
In a tankard of wine! ruddy wine!

Life is short! friends are false! love decays!
And of cloudy nights stars cannot shine—
But there's joy after all of the frays,
In a bumper of wine! ruddy wine!

Shouts of applause. GRETCHEN fills the glasses anew.

EDW. A good song! A good song! Wine forever!

LEO. Well said, comrade? Wine forever! and plenty of it—fill again, fill again—(*They fill*).

EDW. (*Shows signs of drunkenness which increases through the scene*) Wine is a good friend, for it lends itself to all men's humors. Here's Roger—the more he drinks the more silent he grows; and that's to his liking.

ROG. A fool's tongue wags away, from the root up.

EDW. If thou wert not my best friend I'd make thee answer for that "fool," Roger—I have not gone a crusading to be bearded like a boy.

LEO. So you came from the Crusades?

EDW. Aye!—From Acre and Ascalon—cursed towns where all the girls go veiled and never a pretty one lets you peep under. (*To GRETCHEN*) Thou starest in amazement, little one, and well thou mayest—but if thou wert a Saracen girl I could not look at thy big black eyes, (*draws her toward him affectionately*) nor thy plump, rosy cheeks—nor sit thee on my lap—so—(*pulls her on his knee*) nor kiss thee—so—(*kisses her—she gives him a sharp slap and jumps up*).

GRET. Ah the saucy knave! He is bolder than his betters—with a woman. If all Crusaders are like thee, I do not wonder that the Holy Cause fares no better. (*Goes to the fire and begins cooking*.)

LEO. The Christians meet disaster then?

EDW. One cannot say that either—There is a truce between King Richard and the Sultan Saladin. (*Takes up the wine-jug—finds it empty*) More wine! More wine! (*GRETCHEN runs and fills it*) Dost thou not see how the dryess oozes out of my skin? (*Drinks*) Ha! Ha! That was a capital song—let's sing it again—(*In a cracked voice*)

“Here's a health to thee, wine! ruddy wine!”

LANDLADY. Nay, man, it is on the stroke of curfew—when the law compels us to shut our shops—so no more noise to-night, for this is an honest place, though my husband be dead in his grave of a felon.

LEO (*To EDWARD*) And whom dost thou travel with?

EDW. Sir Walter De l'Estaing and the—(*ROGER deliberately throws the contents of his glass in EDWARD'S mouth—he splutters angrily*) The devil take thee, Roger, for a churl—Thou'rt drunk, Roger—thou'rt drunk!

ROG. Come away!

EDW. I have not finished with this worthy comrade—Moreover I have a thirst like the desert—I will leave Vienna wineless, so that this friend still pay.

LEO. Drink away, friends (*All drink*) And who accompanies the noble De l'Estaing?

ROG. Faith! the merchant Hugo, of Damascus.

EDW. Ha! Ha! An excellent merchant, he—one who deals in wares of precious value. I have seen that same merchant—sword in hand—(*ROGER goes behind him—puts both hands over his mouth and so drags him backward till he sprawls on the floor*.) Help! Help!

LEO. Thy pleasantries are rough enough, fellow.

ROG. They serve my turn.

LEO. So it seems. It may serve my turn to have thee soundly whipped.

EDW. (*Rises to his feet in a wud'in condition*) What's that, you churl?—have Roger whipped? No, no! I stand by Roger—and who art thou?

LEO. I serve the Duke of Austria.

EDW. And I the—(*Stops abruptly—laughs vacantly*)

“Here's a health to thee, wine!”—

The tolling of the curfew bell is heard.

LANDLADY. (*Rising*) Now then—you who do not lodge here, clear out—and be quick about it too!

Enter D. F. L., PAGE with a pair of flexible steel gloves at his belt.



PAGE. Sir Walter De l'Estaing and the merchant Hugo will sup below to-night.

Exeunt FIRST and SECOND AUSTRIAN OFFICERS and other roysterers.

LEO. (*To page*) And whose gloves are those, my pretty lad?

PAGE. The merchant Hugo's, sir.

LEO. (*Aside*) Ha! This Hugo goes sword in hand and wears gauntlets of steel—we shall see—we shall see.

LANDLADY. (*To LEOPOLD*) Come, come! clear out! clear out! (*He draws her aside, throws back his cloak and hat for a moment*)

Your grace!

LEO. Keep silent—not a word!

ROG. (*To EDWARD*) Come fool, to bed!

EDW. (*Has become very mellow*) Not till I've kissed my charming little Gretchen again—come dear, to your own Crusading lover—

GRET. I'll kiss no man who has drunk too much.

EDW. (*With gestures of drunken indignation*) Too much!—I!—too much?—Roger now is drunk I admit—and my friend yonder—(*Points to LEOPOLD*) but I? O cruel slander—how canst thou taint so rosy a pair of lips? Can a drunken man stand like this—see? (*tries to stand straight but totters to and fro*) But after all when women wont kiss for love they will for gold—so come—kiss me for a silver crown—(*Shows her piece of money*) with King Richard's head on it, too!

GRET. Is it truly like him? (*EDWARD nods*) Well then I'll kiss thee to get rid of thee. (*They kiss—he gives her the crown*)

EDW. The flavor of thy kiss surpasseth wine. Were I a poet I would write an ode to kisses—which should rhyme with blisses—and misses—and—

ROG. Hisses! Come—to bed! (*Drags him to L.*)

Exeunt ROGER and EDWARD L., EDWARD singing "Here's a health to thee, wine!" LEOPOLD approaches GRETCHEN and takes the coin from her. She recognizes him in a frightened way. Goes on with her cooking at fire.

LEO. It is of Richard's stamp. (*To LANDLADY*) Who are these people at your inn?

LANDLADY. Sir Walter De l'Estaing, of England, and the merchant Hugo, of Damascus.

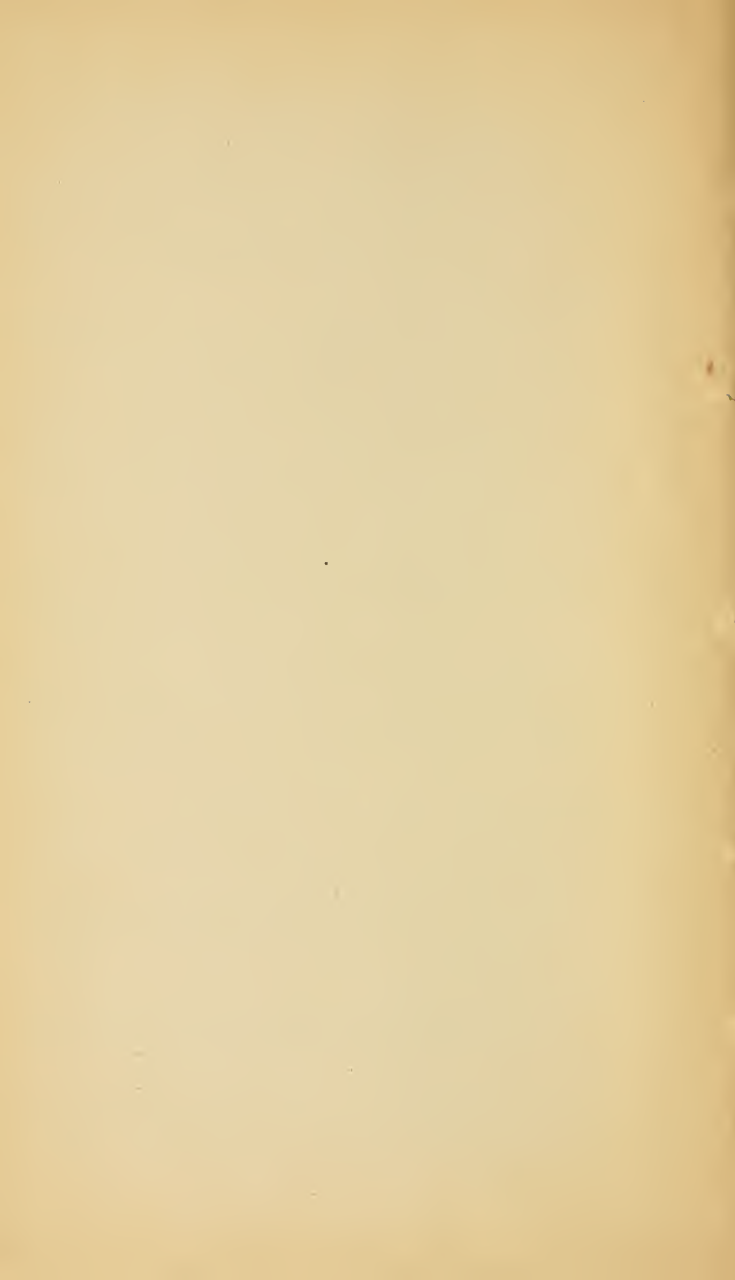
LEO. What manner of man is this Hugo?

LANDLADY. A very noble man indeed—with great blue eyes and yellow beard forked in the centre, like the pictures of Saint John—a very kind man too—but swift to anger, heaven knows—an ill-cooked supper will send him into a fit of rage

LEO. Does he serve Sir Walter?

LANDLADY. Not he—he serves nobody—he walks up and down his room all the morning—sleeps all the afternoon—sups when curfew rings and then enjoys the night air of the streets—and that, your grace, is all I know of him.

LEO. (*Aside*) Yes—I will wager it is Richard. Ah! if I have him—if I have him—(*Turns sharply and addresses LANDLADY*) Say nothing of me to your guests. (*Aside*) I will assure myself—and then—beware, Richard, beware! We are not now at Acre.



Exit LEOPOLD D. R.

LANDLADY. Oh dear? whom have I been harboring, that the Duke himself should come to my poor honse?

LANDLADY *resumes her knitting.* GRETCHEN *arranges supper on the table.*

GRET. There's a haunch of venison—and currant jelly—and Sicily wine—and cheese from France. A supper fit for a King. Ah! that good Hugo! If trouble should come to him how sorry I should be—I think I can hear him now—with that mellow voice of his—

She hums the air of the song sung in first act. Enter D. F. L., RICHARD, as the merchant HUGO, (wearing full beard)—and SIR WALTER. They stand watching GRETCHEN, who busies about the table—humming.

RICH. The pretty child—how sweet the old tune sounds,
You know it, Walter—often in the night,
When I have burned with fever, nothing else
Would sooth me but the singing of that song—
It sends my thoughts to Berengaria—
Poor wife! She sleeps beneath the Syrian sky,
Nor dreams her Richard is so closely pressed.
I'd give a world to clasp her in my arms.

SIR WAL. 'Tis well, sire, that the queen sailed not with us,
She ill had borne the hardships of this voyage,
The shipwreck and the secret march—

RICH. 'Tis well
Indeed. (*They come forward, GRETCHEN curtseys*)

But where are our two soldiers gone?

SIR WAL. (*To LANDLADY*)
Good mother, where are my two servants gone?

LANDLADY. There was a roystering company here to-night,
Your men grew too familiar with the bottle
And now have gone to bed—

SIR WAL. The scoundrels!

RICH. Nay,
Poor devils, they have had their fill offasting—
Besides—we shall not need them.

RICHARD and SIR WALTER *sit at the table.*

Well, my girl,

Here's a good supper.

(*They commence eating*)

GRET. Fit sir, for a King.

SIR WAL. It is indeed—but master Hugo here
Can eat as much as any King—and I
Am no mean trencherman.

RICH. (*Laughingly*) Fit for a King!
And hast thou ever seen a King, my girl?

GRET. No sir, but I have seen Duke Leopold.

RICH. He's very good material for a King—
Faith! I have seen some Kings not half as fine.

GRET. But if you come, sirs, from the Holy Land,
Surely you must have seen King Richard—

RICH.

Yes.

GRET. O! tell me how he looks—for all the troopers
Returning from the Crusades say such tales
Of Richard, I would give my little finger
To see him.

RICH. (*Laughing*) What a waste of pretty flesh—
Why Richard's but a very sorry fellow—
With some brute strength, 'tis true—but bah! he's not
A whit the better favored than myself.
This gentleman knows more of him than I. (*Aside*)
The solemn truth, for what man knows himself?

SIR WAL. Good Master Hugo jests—indeed the King
Is of a handsome face and shapely form—
Although his eyes perhaps do not quite match.
His nose too, is a trifle out of joint—
One shoulder just a shade above the other—
And yellow hair a rather dirty shade.

GRET. Oh la! I don't call that a handsome man.

RICH. 'Tis well the King can't hear thy *friendly* praise.

SIR WAL. Ah truly! he is very vain.

RICH. (*Laughing*) O traitor!

SIR WAL. Nay, Master Hugo, treason it might be
To speak so honestly before the King—
Few are the friendships that can bear the truth.

RICH. I'll pay thee for this yet. (*Pushes plates away—leans back*)
Ah! now I feel

Another man. Come danger, want, or care,
There is much comfort in a well-cooked dinner.
I have at least a royal appetite.

GRET. (*To SIR WAL—as she removes dishes*) I'll not believe your
picture of the King.

RICH. That's right, my girl—it is the veriest slander.

GRET. What! have you changed opinion?

RICH.

Oh indeed

There's a vast gulf between opinions given
Before and after dining. Now I think
Richard's a handsome King.

GRET. (*Pouring out wine*) There's Sicily wine,
I got it for you from the Duke's own butler.

RICH. Leopold's wine! (*Laughs—they drink*)

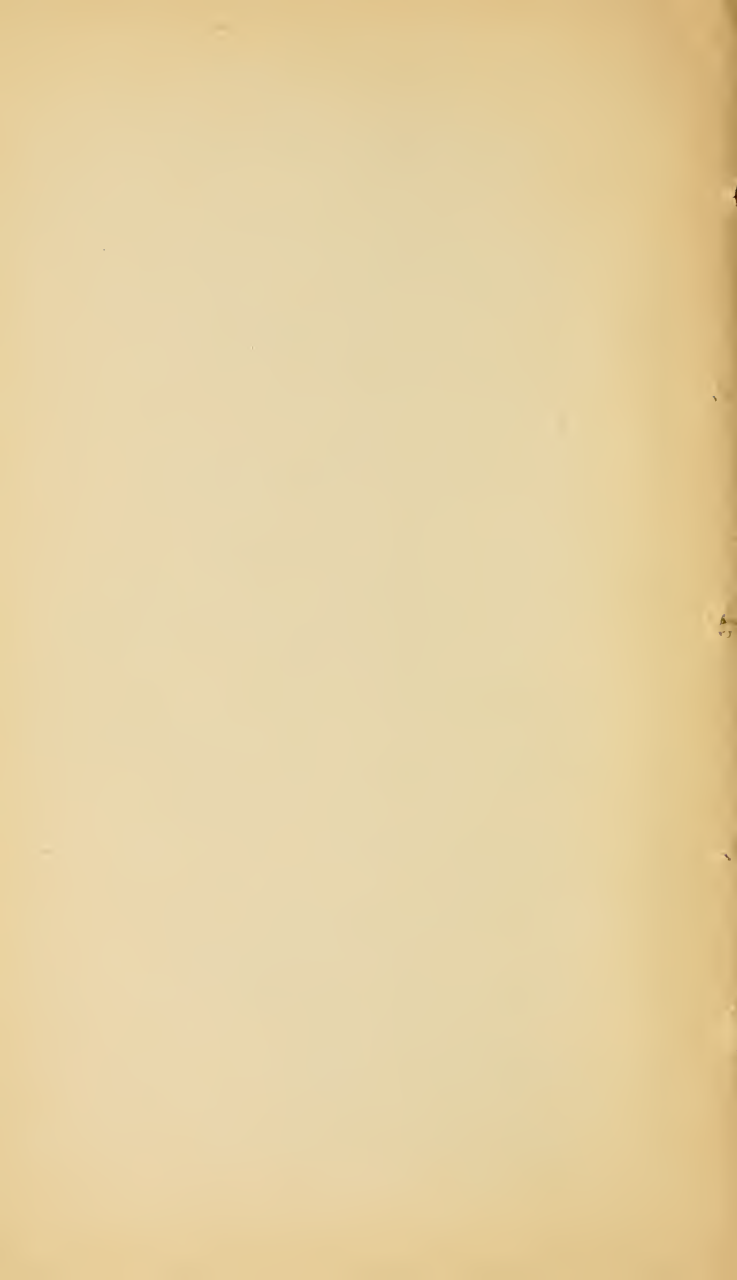
Come here, my pretty girl—

Stretch out the finger that thou wouldst have given
To look at Richard—(*Puts a ring on her finger*)

There's a ring for thee—

Wear it—and if King Richard ever comes
To Vienna—take it too him—for he knows
The merchant Hugo, and for love of him—
Exceeding love of him—will entertain thee.

GRET. A ring for me—and such a pretty pearl—
Now if you were some laughing soldier-lad
I'd give you such a kiss—



RICH. (*Gaily*) Nay give it me.
Heaven forfend that I should lose such guerdon.

(GRETCHEN *coquettishly kisses him.*)

Faith! Walter! there is sometimes compensation
For loss of rank.

GRETCHEN *occupies herself about the room looking every now and then at the ring.*

SIR WAL. 'Tis well we start to-morrow—
A merchant who throws Cyprus pearls away
Might well arouse suspicion.

RICH By the saints!
I never thought of that.

SIR WAL. You were not made
For traveling *incognito* sire, that's plain.
But yesterday you gave so royal a present
To some poor baron who chanced to treat us well
That all the neighborhood was in a ferment—
You know we had to run to hide ourselves.
And now you're throwing pearls about as if
Jewels were thick as dust.

RICH. Well, grumbling sir,
No man can break the habits of his life
Without some practice

SIR WAL. Would that we were safe
In England.

RICH. Ah! I cannot think it true
That John's a traitor—yet he's very crafty.
Well we shall soon be there and know the worst—
Or best—Come, let us stretch our legs awhile,
I feel as stiff—

SIR WAL. But those two churls are drunk.

RICH. Well what of that? We two can at a pinch
Defend ourselves. Besides, who would attack
A noble Knight of England and a poor
Damascus merchant, taking the night air?
They will but think it is a foreign custom.
Come, Walter, I insist!

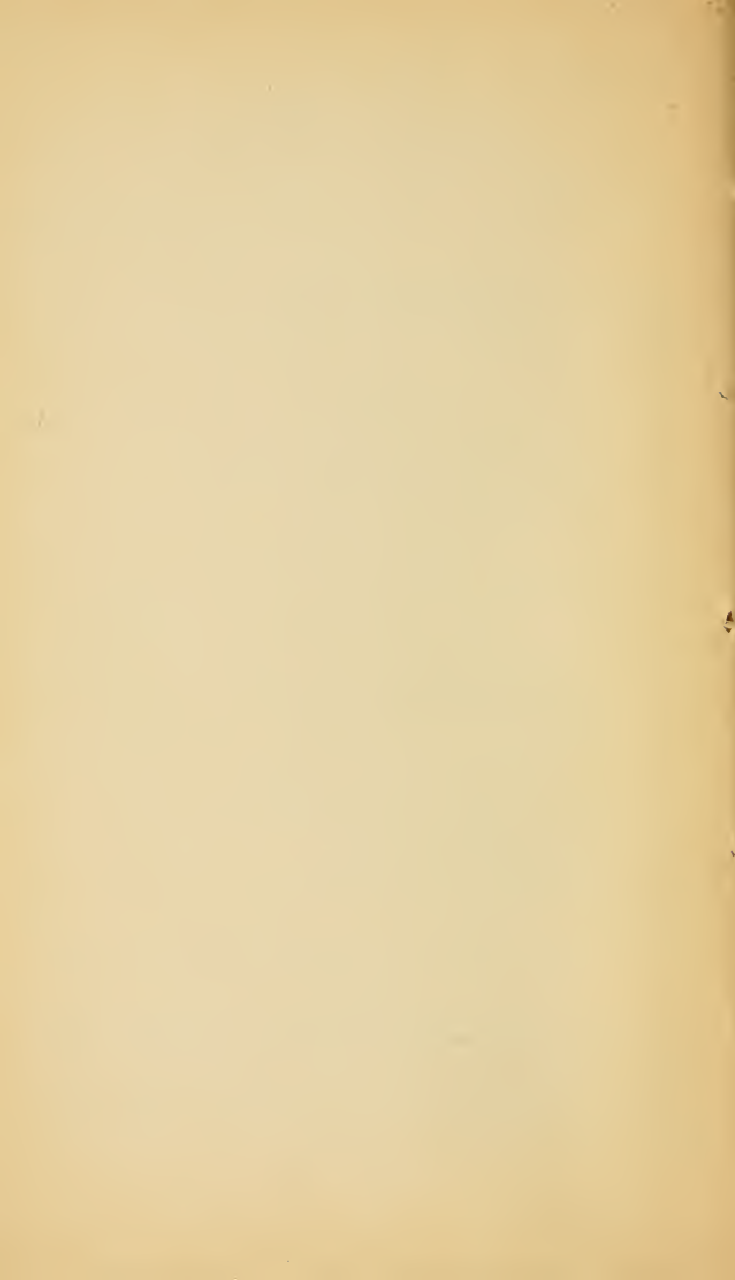
SIR WAL. Then I obey.

*They walk towards D. R., when a loud knocking is heard on the outside.
They stop.*

LANDLADY. (*Going D. R.*) Hey-day! Here's a hurly-burly. What's
the matter there? What's the matter? Do you know the time o' night?

FIRST AUS OFF. (*From outside*) Open in the name of the Duke!
(*Knocking renewed*)

LANDLADY. Open the door? Well! well! we're honest folk and there's
nothing to be afraid of. Yes! yes! keep quiet, keep quiet—have a
minute's patience.



She opens door. Enter FIRST and SECOND AUSTRIAN OFFICERS and half-a-dozen followers.

Now what do you want?

GRET. (*Mockingly*) In the name of the duke!

FIRST AUS. We want wine—and lodging for the night.

RICHARD and SIR WALTER stand L. F.

LANDLADY. That you'll not get here. It's against the law to harbor strangers after curfew.

FIRST AUS. Bah! Here are the Duke's orders. (*Hands her a paper*) We are troopers of his own company just come from the Holy Land—and there is no place else for us to-night.

LANDLADY. Well! well! We must obey the Duke. Give them some wine, Gretchen.

THE AUSTRIANS sit at table—GRETCHEN brings them wine.

RICH. (*To SIR WALTER*)

By special order of the duke—dost hear?

SIR WAL. Is it possible that he hath found us out

RICH. We'll stay and see the end of this adventure.

SIR WAL. I' faith 'tis safer here than out-o-doors,
If Leopold hath scent of us.

FIRST AUS. (*To RICHARD and SIR WALTER*) Ho there!
Comrades!—come join us!

GRET. "Comrades"—Well-a-day!
This gentleman's an English Knight—and this
A merchant of Damascus.

SECOND AUS. Knight or merchant
They both come from the Crusades.

RICH. Ha!

SECOND AUS. And so
We're brethren of the Cross. Come, comrades, drink.

SIR WAL. To what?

FIRST AUS. Confusion to the Saracens.

SIR WAL. Good! I'll drink that with pleasure.

FIRST AUS. (*To RICHARD*) So must thou
Old grey-frock.

RICH. Yes—two bumpers to thy one.

RICHARD and SIR WALTER sit at table—ALL drink the toast. *Exit GRETCHEN L.*

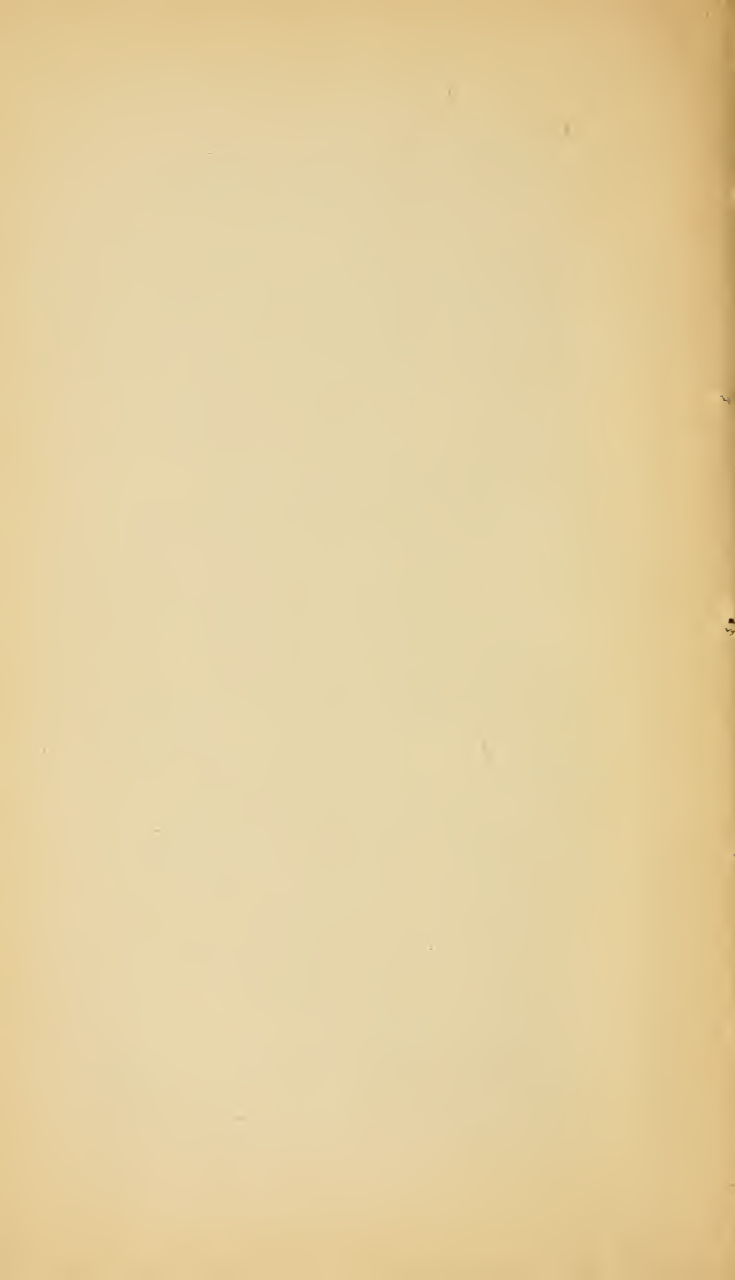
SECOND AUS. A jovial old trader, by the Mass!
What dost thou deal in?

RICH. Good Damascus blades.

FIRST AUS. Drink! drink! another toast! Long live the Duke!

SIR WAL. What Duke?

SECOND AUS. What Duke? There's only one Duke here,
That's Leopold of Austria.



FIRST AUS. To the Duke!
Come fill thy cup, thou dealer in old metals!
Rinse out thy shaggy throat with mellow sack.
A rare old shopman, eh?

SECOND AUS. A drunken jack
I'll warrant. What's thy name, old scrap-iron?

RICH. Now by St. George!—

SIR WAL. (*Interrupting him*) My friend, good gentlemen,
Is called the armorer Hugo.

FIRST AUS. Is the man
Ashamed of his name—that you must tell it for him?

Enter GRETCHEN L.

GRET. (*To AUSTRIANS*)
Your rooms are ready, sirs.

SECOND AUS. Well, we are not.
We've found good comrades and we'll stick by them.
But gentlemen, we've not yet drunk the Duke.

FIRST AUS. We'll do it standing—come, sirs, to your feet—
Here's to Duke Leopold! (*All rise*)

RICH. Here's to the Duke!
*And may he never have a better friend
Drink to his health than I.* (*All sit*)

FIRST AUS. That's right—that's right!
Old brass-bones took it standing.

SECOND AUS. By the Mass!
I did not catch his phrase. (*To RICHARD*) Repeat it, sir!

RICH. Go to the devil!

FIRST AUS. Hey-day! What's all this?
An officer insulted by a merchant?
Come sir, I'll teach you manners.

*He jumps to his feet and draws his sword. RICHARD faces him. SIR WAL-
TER interposes between them.*

SIR WAL. If you be
True gentlemen you will not offer fight
To an unarmed man. In any case you first
Must deal with me.

FIRST AUS. Have at thee, then!

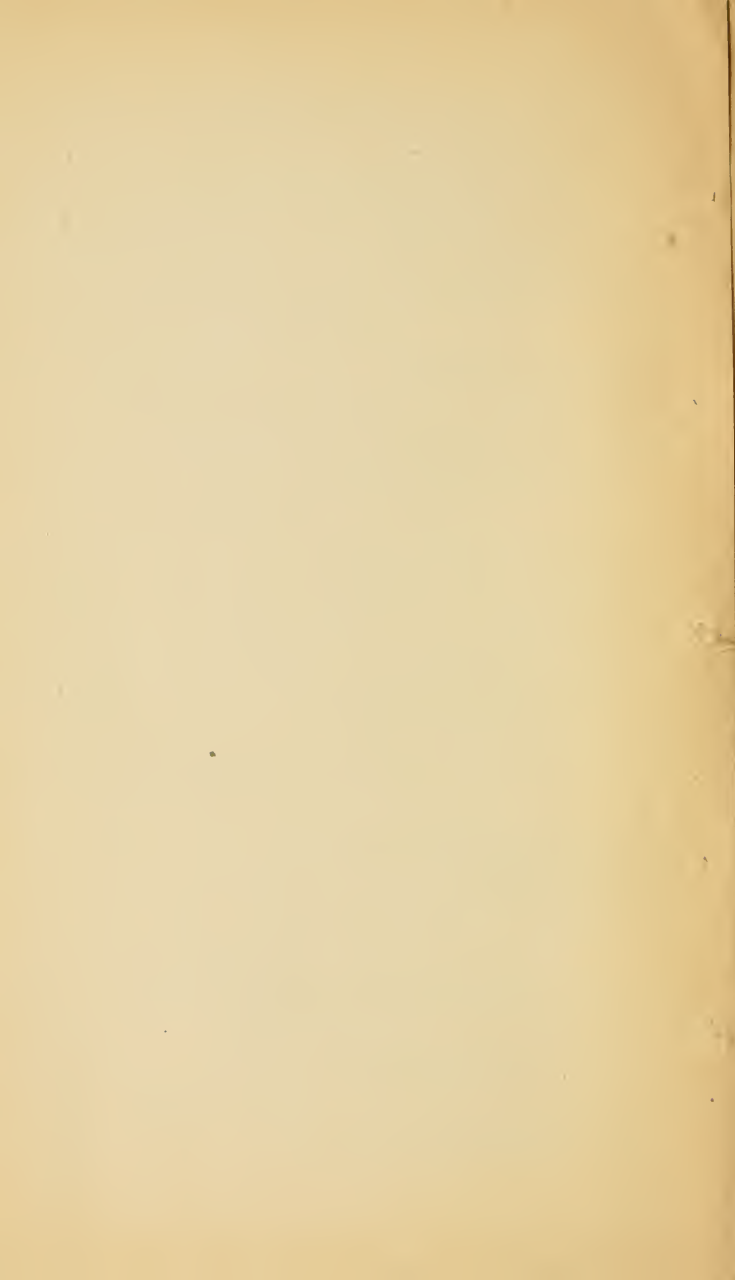
They draw and cross swords. GRETCHEN pushes between them.

GRET. No fighting here! These gentlemen are guests—
Peaceable men, who pay their reckoning—
I'll call the watch.

FIRST AUS. Come, come—a charming girl.
And what a pretty ring—who gave it thee?

GRET. A better man than thou—

FIRST AUS. Perhaps—perhaps—
Why 'tis a Cyprus pearl—I'll wager now
That Master Hugo gave it thee.



GRET. And if
He did ?

FIRST AUS. Why thou shalt give me a small kiss
For finding out the secret. (*Seizes her*)

GRET. That I'll not !
Come, let me go !

FIRST AUS. I'll have that kiss, my dear,
In spite of thee or fate or master Hugo—
The sly old dog—(*They struggle*)

GRET. Help ! Help ! He's hurting me !

RICHARD catches FIRST AUSTRIAN by the throat and flings him to the ground.

RICH. Now by St. George you cur ! I've long enough
Endured these insults—get you hence I say—

FIRST AUSTRIAN struggles to his feet—all the others rise with drawn swords.

SECOND AUS. We're from the Duke.

RICH. A curse upon your Duke !

SIR WAL. Sire !

ALL. Treason ! Treason !

FIRST AUS. Guard the passage ways !
Now Master Hugo, we'll account with thee.

Doors R. open. Troopers seen outside.

SIR WAL. Put up your sword, sire; there's a troop outside,
Resistance would be useless—Gentlemen
I pray you think a little in cold blood—
'Tis true this man has struck an officer,
But I will answer for him—I will fight
His cause.

FIRST AUS. No, no ! We'll take him to the Duke. (*To RICHARD*)
Give me your sword.

RICH. These are pretenses sir,
Send for the Duke.

SIR WAL. No, no ; Good gentlemen
Will you accept a thousand marks of ransom ?
And we'll set out at once.

FIRST AUS. My orders are
To take him to the duke.

RICH. Enough—enough—
'Tis not my custom, sir, to give my sword
To any but the chiefest in command—
Send for the Duke, for I will not stir hence.

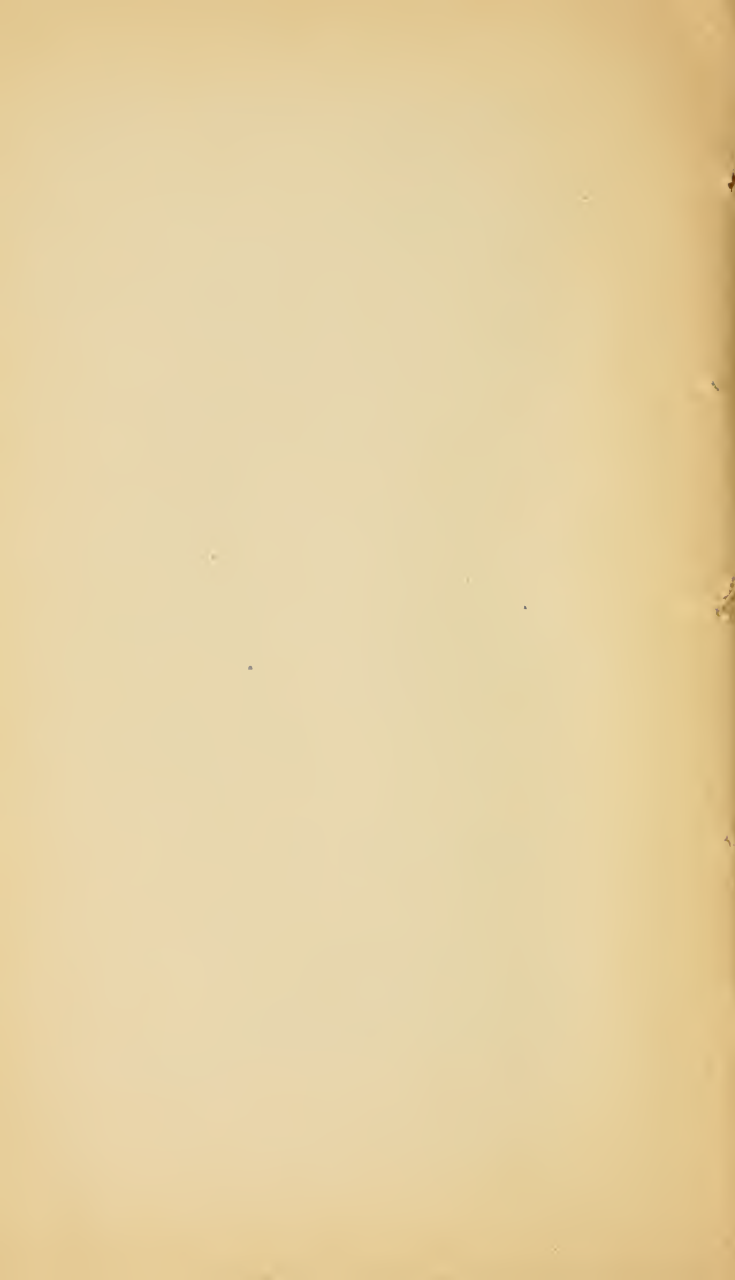
SECOND AUS. Fine talk from a Damascus merchant--eh ?

FIRST AUS. Fine talk indeed—give me your sword—

RICH. Stand back !
Back on your peril.

They recoil—Enter LEOPOLD R.

FIRST AUS. Ah, your grace !



LEO. What's this?

FIRST AUS (*Pointing to RICHARD*)
This is the Merchant Hugo.

LEO. (*Aside*) It is he!

RICH. Duke Leopold your fortunes touch their top—
You might have sent in a more gentle way
Than these rough brawlers use.

LEO. Are you indeed
The Merchant Hugo? I must question you.

RICH. Enough of this—You know me and I know
You. (*Throws open his frock, disclosing coat of linked mail*)
With this frock I bury an old friend.

ALL. Richard!

GRET. What! Richard?

RICH. Richard of England, girl.
You've had your wish. (*Hands sword to LEOPOLD*)
Your grace, I yield my sword.

LEO. Now do the winds of fortune fill my sails.

RICHARD C., LEOPOLD R., GRETCHEN L., *in attitude of bewilderment.*

CURTAIN.



ACT IV.

LA TOUR TÈNEBREUSE !

SCENE.—*The Castle of Triefels set in second grooves L., ending at c. in a round tower, which rises to full height of stage, with grated windows at each story—windows set obliquely, facing R. proscenium. Left of tower a massive wall, with heavy carved doors approached by a short flight of steps. Wall extends into second grooves L., till lost to sight. A narrow terrace runs around the tower at about half its height, extending along the wall. All practicable. Rough, gloomy architecture. R.—Open country from F. to third grooves, where ground sinks representing the left bank of the Rhine—Landscape on flat represents right bank of the Rhine, lonely and desolate. Low murmur of the river heard through act.*

TIME.—*Sunset to night.*

Discovered—EDWARD and ROGER, seated on ground, C. F., polishing a breastplate.

EDW. A year and three months since they caught King Richard, like a fox in a poacher's trap. A year and three months—well—well!-- Dost thou hear, old bear?

ROG. One cannot well be with thee and not hear.

EDW. Always surly as a bull-dog. Thou art a born misanthrope, Roger. War cannot loosen thy tongue, nor wine make thee garrulous—woman herself is powerless to break thy stony silence. Thou art fit but for one thing.

ROG. Hm?

EDW. To be talked to. Thou excitest greater eloquence than thou couldst ever express. Dost thou know the hour of the King's return?

ROG. No.

EDW. I pity the Duke if Richard ever gets free. I would not change skins with him then. (*A moment of silence*) Dost thou ever think of Gretchen, the little maid of the inn?

ROG. Yes.

EDW. Thou dost? Wonders will never cease?—So do I, Roger, often and often—she is the only girl I have ever met to whose apron-string I would willingly tie myself—and how she wept for the King.

Enter GRETCHEN R. in page's dress, with high boots.

GRET. Good-day, sirs.

EDW. Good-day, my lad. (*GRETCHEN starts*)

GRET. Saints of Heaven! You are surely King Richard's men.

EDW. Ay, lad! But how dost thou know that? Thou art not of these parts.

GRET. (*Laughing*) Come, come now—don't you remember me?

EDW. Not I.

ROG. Gretchen—(*EDWARD jumps to his feet, throwing the breastplate away—ROGER rises more slowly*)

EDW. What, Gretchen? It is—it is—O moment of happiness worth a world of grief—(*Runs toward her with outstretched arms—GRETCHEN switches her whip in his face—he recoils*)

GRET. Keep back, sauciness—I am now Rudolph, the page of a good friend of yours.

EDW. Of ours?

GRET. I mean of your master. But what's this castle?

EDW. The Castle Triefels.

GRET. And is the King confined here?

EDW. Yes indeed—and Sir Walter de l'Estaing with him. And we two—though they let us roam about the grounds, which is more than the King or Sir Walter can do.

GRET. And which is the King's room?

EDW. Nay, they have never let us know.

GRET. Wilt thou see the King to-day?

EDW. They have taken him off somewhere—but he will be brought back soon.

GRET. And wilt thou see him?

EDW. Perhaps yes, perhaps no—according to Duke Leopold's whim. Sometimes he permits his attendants to be with him—sometimes not.

GRET. If thou dost, give him this ring, (*hands him ring*) and tell him help is near—let him keep well on the watch, for friends are near. O if I can help to free him she will—(*Stops abruptly*)

EDW. But whom dost thou serve in thy boy's dress?

GRET. Can I depend on thee!

EDW. On me? Well now!

ROG. I answer for him.

GRET. Then I serve the minstrel Blondel, and a powerful friend of his.

EDW. I do not know that I like that.

GRET. And what business is that of thine?

EDW. It touches me in a serious place—the heart—But wilt thou not kiss me in memory of old days? A brotherly kiss, at least.

GRET. No indeed! I know you for an impudent knave—so don't come near me. (*He approaches her*) What—you will?—then take that—

She cuts him with her whip and exits, running R.

EDW. (*Rubbing his cheek*) O the vixen! But this is a curious affair—what dost thou think of it, Roger?

ROG. The girl is honest.

EDW. She handles a very honest whip. (*Looks L.*) Ah! the King is coming—and, look Roger—there is Sir Baldwin de Bethune, our old commander.

Enter L., RICHARD escorted by a troop of Austrian soldiers—his hands chained—SIR BALDWIN DE BETHUNE and SIR WALTER DE L'ESTAING, follow—The soldiers range themselves by the door of the castle—RICHARD SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER C. F., EDWARD and ROGER R.

RICH. Nay, nay, Sir Baldwin, let bygones be bygones—
He held me as a prisoner of war,
The ransom's paid, and there's an end of it.

SIR BALD. An end of it?

RICH. Yes, sir, on Richard's faith.

I am so glad to get my freedom back
That I may well forgive this rancorous duke.

SIR BALD. But I, sire, cannot quite so soon forgive.

SIR WAL. Nor I.

RICH. Pshaw! pshaw! I can but think I'm free.
Within these walls I've lived a long long year,
As long as all the balance of my life;
How I have yearned for freedom.

I have watched
The great hawks whirling downward from the rocks
To snatch the little finches—I have seen,
When Winter spread his snows beneath the moon,
Lean wolves slip down the hills toward the sheep—
All from my narrow window have I seen—
And gladly would have given crown and throne
For the wild liberty of hawk or wolf.
And now that I am free, I promise you
Some of the old-time roughness shall be gone.
Imprisonment's a rare good school for Kings.
But what news of the queen, Sir Baldwin?

SIR BALD. Ah!

Dear sire, to cloud your gladness so—

RICH. What's that?

Is she not well?

SIR BALD. She started, sire, for England
Some seven months ago—and it is feared
That Saladin o'ertook her.

RICH. It is feared?

Do you not know?

SIR BALD. There is no news of her.

RICH. No news of her? But Saladin?—Ah no!
The Sultan is an honorable man,
There must be some mistake—

SIR BALD. He makes pretence
Of knowing nothing of her.

RICH. By the saints!
If he has done her harm he soon shall learn
That Richard's free!

SIR BALD. Ah, sire—still more bad news—
To speak blunt truth your brother John is thought
To be a traitor—

RICH. John—my brother?—

SIR BALD. Yes—
I fear if we delay that you will find
No throne to sit on, and a welcome worse
Than Leopold's.

Enter LEOPOLD L. RICHARD stretches out his chained hands.

RICH. Strike off your chains, my lord,
I must leave here to-morrow.

LEO. What—so soon?

RICH. I' faith, my stay has been somewhat prolonged—
I have bad news from England.

LEO. Ah!

RICH. The Queen—
My throne—are both in danger—I must start
At once.

LEO. Leave us alone, sirs—we have yet
Some further business.

The soldiers divide into two ranks—SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER enter the castle followed by EDWARD and ROGER—The soldiers then march in, closing doors behind them.—It grows dark.

LEO. So, sire, you are free!

RICH. At last!

LEO. The ransom's paid.

RICH. In full.

LEO. And I

Commanded by the council to release you.

RICH. Indeed you state it plainly.

LEO. Do you know

The wrongs that you have done me?

RICH. Do you know

The foul wrong you have done me?

LEO. Not one tithe

Of the deep injuries that I have suffered
From you—for I shall feel them all my life.

RICH. I do not understand you.

LEO. There you lie!

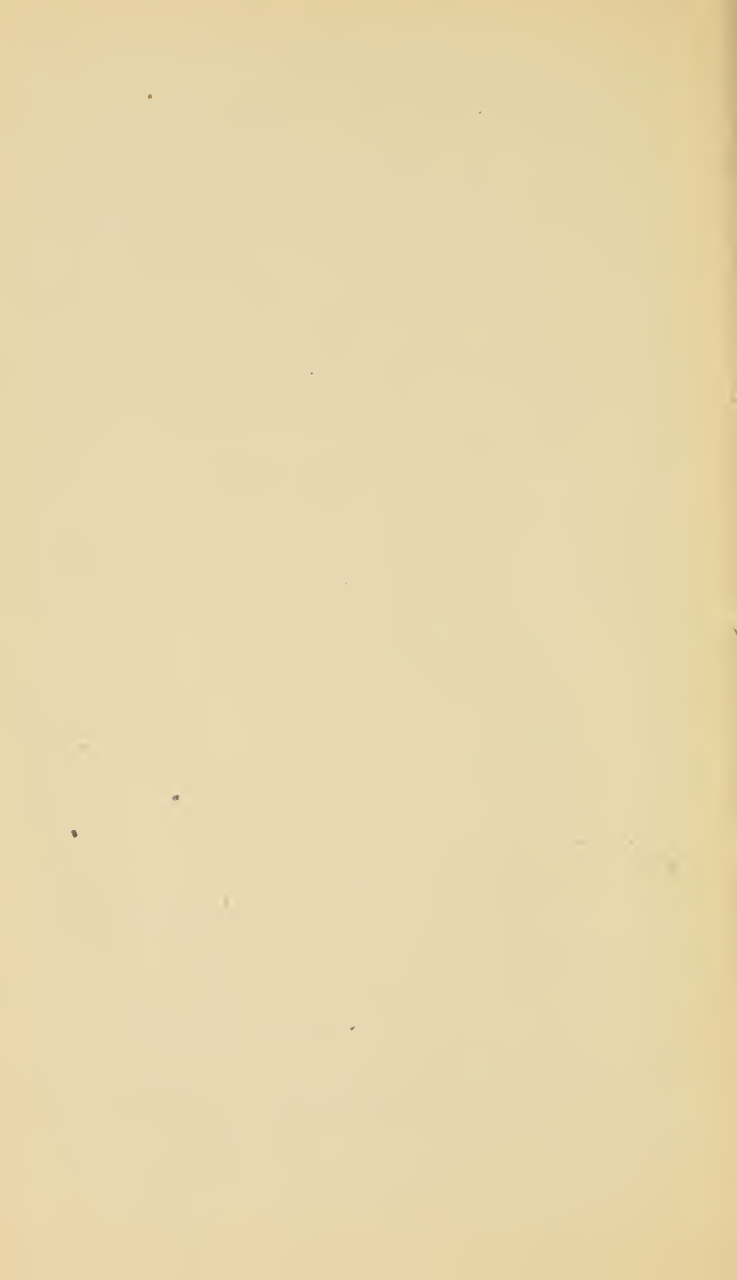
RICH. By heaven! 'tis well for you my hands are bound.

LEO. Be that as it may, you lie—you know full well
I loved my cousin Berengaria.

RICH. Enough of this, enough!

LEO. I love her still,

I love her—O so madly that my lips
Grow white to speak her name.



RICH. Traitor! (*Calls loudly*)
Sir Baldwin! Walter!

Enter from castle doors SIR BALDWIN, and SIR WALTER, followed by EDWARD and ROGER, and the Austrian soldiers, who stand in ranks before the castle.

Run to the council—see the Emperor—quick!
This man would hold me yet despite the ransom.

At a sign from LEOPOLD, the soldiers surround SIR BALDWIN SIR WALTER, EDWARD and ROGER.

LEO. Escort these gentlemen beyond the town
Until they cross the limits of the duchy,
SIR BALD. In the name of England I protest.

SIR WAL. And I.

LEO. In the name of the devil get you hence—Away!

Exit SIR BALDWIN, SIR WALTER, EDWARD and ROGER, surrounded by soldiers L. Another troop of soldiers comes out of the castle and stands in ranks before it.

Now sire, we'll change your room, I have a fancy
To lodge you in the tower.

RICH. O treachery!
As damned as Judas! Ah! to live again
The long black days of prison—to behold
The gay world through my bars—the free glad waves—
The river foaming merrily in the sun,
The grasses nodding blithely in the breeze,
All free but me—

LEO. Your room is ready, sire.

RICHARD *kneels.*

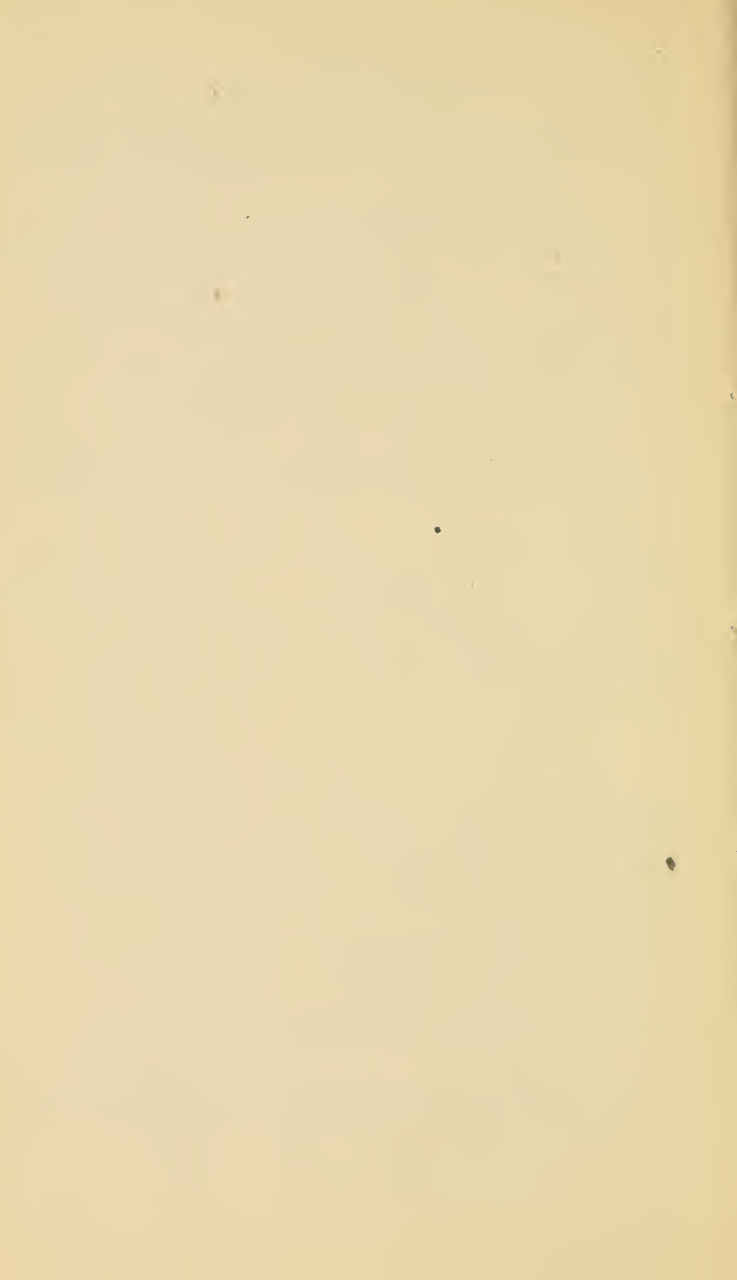
RICH. See, Leopold, I will forget all pride
And beg for freedom—give it me, and I
Will blot the past all out—and make you lord
Of any of my duchies you may wish.

LEO. Thy duchies? Thy domain is narrowed down
To yonder room.

RICH. (*Jumps to his feet*) I must be free—my wife!
O God! my wife! They say that Saladin
Has seized her—Set me free to get her back,
And on my knightly honor I'll return.

LEO. I wish the Sultan joy of his sweet prize.
I' faith I envy him (*Brutally*) Come! to your room!
It groweth late.

The soldiers open ranks—RICHARD totters up the steps—then suddenly faces LEOPOLD and holding up his hands, light chains hanging from them, he curses him.



RICH. Accursed be thy soul !
Thy traitor's soul ! May God send fiends from hell
To torture thee as I am tortured now ! (*Voice drops*)
O ! I shall wear my brain out with much grief.

LEO. Escort King Richard to the tower-chamber.

RICH. O infamy !

RICHARD *enters the castle—followed by the soldiers. Faint moonlight.*

LEO. How hard he takes the shock.
These men of muscle often break the first.
The sorry fool to think I'd let him go,
He measured ill the strength of jealousy—
I would not let him slip for twenty ransoms—
Nay, she shall never fondle him again,
Nor sing him pretty songs.

Enter R. BERENGARIA in the long frock and hood of a palmer—a rosary hung at her neck—a staff in her hand.

Hallo ! who's there ?

BER. A palmer, sir, from Palestine.

LEO. Ah ha !

What news ?

BER. To whom, sir, do I speak ?

LEO. I am

Duke Leopold of Austria.

BER. (*Startled*) Leopold !

LEO. Yes, Leopold—but do not be afraid
Good palmer, I'll not eat thee.

BER. Truly, sir,
I am not used to talking with the great.

LEO. Well clear thy throat and speak out like a man,
A great man's ears can listen just as well
As any ass's—Come sir, what's the news ?

BER. King Richard's truce is still kept holily,
There's been no fighting since he left.

LEO. So, so !
The Queen is yet at Acre, I suppose ?

BER. Nay, sir, the poor queen left some time ago,
'Twas said to join her husband, and 'tis feared
That Saladin hath made her prisoner.

LEO. That's no news here— (*Goes up steps*)

BER. My lord I humbly crave
A lodging for the night.

LEO. That thou'lt not get—
I feed no priests. (*Opens door*)

BER. My lord !

LEO. I feed no priests.

LEOPOLD *enters the castle and shuts door after him with a clang. BERENGARIA rushes to C. F., kneels—throws back hood so that audience can clearly recognize her.*

BER. O Richard ! Richard ! I have come at last,
 O'er Syrian sands, across the foaming sea,
 Through woods and wilds and wicked towns of men,
 Here have I come to find thee, O my King !
 My husband ! Now though walls and bars be fast
 Between us—never fear we'll find a way
 To meet, for love is stronger far than stone,
 And knows not iron from a wisp of straw. (*Rises*)
 'Tis night and all is quiet.

Runs to edge of bank, leans over and calls

Blondel ?

BLON. (*From below*) Ho !

BER. Come ! All is still.

Enter c., BLONDEL and GRETCHEN up the bank.

My girl, this is the tower ?

GRET. It is, your grace ! The Castle of Triefels.

BLON. (*To Gretchen*) Stay thou and watch the boat.

GRETCHEN *disappears down bank.* BERENGARIA and BLONDEL *come f.*

BER. Just now I saw

Duke Leopold.

BLON. He did not know you ?

BER. No.

I asked for a night's lodging—

BLON. Ah, your grace !—

BER. Which he refused—had he but let me in

I would have found my Richard quick enough.

But now these walls, these scores of windows—all

In darkness, scarcely lighted by the moon—

How can we find him ?

BLON. There's one way, your grace,

Will never fail us if the King be near.

BER. And that ?

BLON. I'll sing the song he loved to hear,

The one we sang to you that happy day

You landed at Messina.

BER. Ah ! 'tis true,

If he be near he'll hear it. (*Door of castle creaks*)

BLON. Hist !

BERENGARIA and BLONDEL *crouch in the shadow of the tower.* LEOPOLD
comes out of castle and stands on steps.

LEO. Ho there !

Enter L., on the terrace half-way up castle, the watchman, a flaming torch in his hand.

WATCHMAN. Your grace?

LEO. What noise is that?

WATCHMAN. What noise, your grace?

LEO. I fancied I heard voices.

WATCHMAN. Nay, your grace,

It must have been the river

LEO. Look along

The ramparts.

WATCHMAN. Yes, your grace.

WATCHMAN *walks about terrace waving torch.*

There's no one here.

LEO. Keep a sharp watch to-night—'tis possible
Sir Baldwin might escape.

WATCHMAN. Ay! ay! your grace.

LEOPOLD *goes in castle—doors close after him.*

The devil take him for a sleepless loon,
Good honest men can't keep awake o' nights.
Heigh-ho!

WATCHMAN *walks along terrace, going around the tower where he disappears.*

BER. Now Blondel, he has passed. O heaven!
Let this sweet minstrel's voice reach Richard's ears.

BERENGARIA *kneels* C. F. BLONDEL *stands under the tower and sings.*

BLON. When the west wind blows,
And the red, red rose
 Loseth her petals one by one—
And the wan stream flows
Where no flower grows,
 Far from the moonlight and the sun

He stops—they listen.

BER. No, all is quiet. O pity, Heaven! pity!

BLON. (*Sings*) Then I kiss my love,
And her silken glove
 Fix in my helm and ride away—
And the brooding dove,
Cooeth soft above—
 Thrilling with grief the distance gray.

They listen—all is silent

BER. All quiet! O river cease thy brawling noise—
Die down, O wind! that I may hear my love—
For surely he will answer.

RICHARD'S *voice is heard, very faint, as if far away.*

RICH. (*Sings*) But the skies will change,
 And the level range
 Buries not always sun and moon—
 In my lady's grange
 I shall ne'er be strange—
 Watching she waits from night to noon.

BER. (*As in an ecstasy repeats*)

"Watching she waits from night to noon."
 'Tis he—'tis he—quick, Blondel—not a word
 Of me.

BLON. (*Calls*) Who's there?

RICH. (*From above, voice faint*) I, Richard! Thou must be
 My Blondel.

BLON. Yes, sire, it is I.

RICH. Old friend!

I knew thy voice—what art thou doing here?

BLON. We come here to release thee.

RICH. But, dear friend,

Though they have taken off my chains, I am
 Unarmed behind thick iron.

BLON. We have arms

That thou art wont to use.

RICH. What arms?

BLON. Thy good

Two-handed sword.

BERENGARIA *takes two-handed sword from under her frock and gives it to*
 BLONDEL.

RICH. Nay give me that and I
 Will hew through stone and iron as through sponge.

BLON. Then up I come, sire—tie thy handkerchief
 Outside thy window, that I may plainly see.

RICHARD *ties handkerchief outside highest window. The ray of the moon*
falls directly on it. BLONDEL ties the two-handed sword to his neck
and begins climbing.

RICH. Careful now, Blondel, careful! all my life
 Hangs on thy feet—see that they stick on well.

BER. Guard him, O saints! Hist! here's the watchman.

BLONDEL *has reached the terrace—he crouches in the shadow of the tower.*
Enter WATCHMAN L., on the terrace, with torch.

WATCHMAN. The devil take the duke, I say.

RICH. Amen!

WATCHMAN. A father of a family to spend
 His nights in trotting round a mouldy wall
 That even the bats fight shy of. By the Mass!
 I yawn until I swallow all the fog
 The river breeds.

WATCHMAN *goes round the tower and disappears.*

BER. He's passed.

BLON. (*Climbs rapidly—arrives at window*) And here I am.

BLONDEL *passes the sword through the bars of the window to* RICHARD.

RICH. My sword! Ah, Blondel, thou hast brought me life!
Now get thee down for it will soon rain iron.

BLONDEL *rapidly descends.* RICHARD *hews the bars with his sword, singing the last verse of song. Throws down a bar that strikes the ground with a heavy thud.*

There's one bar—catch it for a weapon, Blondel.
And there's another. (*Throws another down.*)

Give it to thy friend,

The grey-frock that I see below.

BER. (*Catching BLONDEL'S arm*) No! No!
Not one word, Blondel—if we get him safe
To England he shall know me—not till then—
He shall not be impeded with his wife;
Why he would stop to fight for me, perchance,
And let himself be taken again—No—no!

RICH. Now I am coming, Blondel.

RICHARD *begins descent.*

BLON. Back, sire, back!
The watchman's here again.

RICH. I am not used
To turning back.

RICHARD *reaches terrace.* Enter WATCHMAN L., *on terrace—he walks along to where RICHARD stands, and meets him face to face.*

Hallo! my friend!

WATCHMAN. (*Amazed*) Hallo?
Good Lord! King Richard!

He is paralyzed with terror. RICHARD *laughingly points sword at his heart three times, making cabalistic signs. Resumes his descent.*

RICH. Stay just where thou art.
I throw swords upward with a marvellous skill.

WATCHMAN *stands transfixed with terror.* RICHARD *finishes descent and jumps to the ground.*

Ah Blondel! free at last! (*Points to BERENGARIA*)
And who is this?

BLON. A palmer, sire, who's done as much as I
And more, to save you.

RICH. Palmer, when thou wilt,
Ask aught of me thou wishest—it is thine.

BLOK. Now, sire, to the boat!

Enter GRETCHEN C., up bank—she runs to meet them.

GRET. Ah sire! you surely know me?

RICH. My little maid of the inn!

WATCHMAN *rushes off L., shouting* HELP! HELP!

Ah ha! too late—this time the Duke is foiled!

ALL *descend the bank.* LEOPOLD *rushes out of the castle followed by soldiers with torches.* RICHARD *calls from below.*

Farewell, my lord—Farewell! A pleasant night!

LEOPOLD *runs to bank.* *Quick music—air of “O Richard! O mon Roi!”*

CURTAIN.

NOTE.—Action must be very rapid at close.



ACT V.

HOME FROM THE WARS !

SCENE.—*A room of state in the Tower of London. C., Tall arched window opening on to practicable balcony. R., Dais with throne on it. L., Large arched doorway with double doors. Walls hung with tapestry.*

TIME.—*Morning.*

Discovered.—LEOPOLD, *dressed as if just from a journey. He has a gloomy, reckless air.*

LEO. No news of him—no news! his foggy isle
Is quiet enough.

Enter a SERVANT L.

SERVANT. (*Announces*) His Highness the Prince John!

Enter JOHN, L. Exit SERVANT L.

LEO. Your grace!

JOHN. Ah, cousin! you are doubly welcome.
I thought to hear from you, but this indeed
Is very kind.

LEO. (*Abruptly*) The devil is loose again!

JOHN. What do you say?

LEO. The devil is loose again!
I say—Beware!

JOHN. (*Amazed*) I do not understand.

LEO. Then in plain words—your brother Richard's free!

JOHN. (*In a bewildered manner*)
Free?—Richard?—

LEO. Yes!

JOHN. (*Passionately*) Ah! you have played me false,
My money's wasted—

LEO. Not so fast, your grace,
I have not played you false—

JOHN. (*Angrily*) But he is free!

He suddenly comes to himself, and assumes a pleasant manner

There, cousin, pardon me—my wits are wild—
I do forget—the ransom is accepted—
Yes—yes the King—

LEO. (*Brutally*) No smooth-tongued lying now,
There is no time for diplomatic grease—
Let us talk plainly.

JOHN. (*Moodily*) Well!

LEO. I did my part
Not for the money that you sent me, though,
But for my own revenge.

JOHN. I thought as much.

LEO. The evening that the ransom was accepted
I shut him up again in Triefels—then
I sent away de Bethune and de l'Estaing
And the two men he kept with him—My God!
I should have killed him then—I was a fool!

JOHN. You would not kill him?

LEO. (*Fiercely*) As gladly as you would.

(*A moment of silence.*)

I had arranged to take him the next day
'To an old keep of mine where he could rot'
For years and no one know it. That same night
The minstrel Blondel—may the devil seize him—
Sang under Richard's window—Richard heard,
And answered. Then, by climbing like a cat,
Blondel got up to where he was, and brought
His great two-handed sword to him—you know
The devil's strength—he hewed the window out—
I need not tell the rest.

JOHN. Was Blondel alone?

LEO. A palmer from the Holy Land was with him.

JOHN. Then Richard may be even now in England.

LEO. Perhaps. But I set out at utmost speed
And scoured the country round with no success;
Then I came here post-haste—I think I must
Have distanced him.

JOHN. I have no news of him.

LEO. Well! Are you still resolved to seize the crown?

JOHN. But how?

LEO. By killing Richard.

JOHN. (*Shuddering.*) No, no, no!

LEO. You could condemn him to a living death.
But cannot strike the one decisive blow—
Pshaw! Coward!—

JOHN. Had another month gone by
He would have come in vain; for all grew ripe
To oust him from the throne, and seat me there.
The barons are aweary of a king
Who spends and fights and spends the whole year long.

LEO. You have a better chance than ever now.
For no one knows of his escape—set watch
Upon the coast, and when his ship makes port

Let all on board of her be killed—give out
That they are Danish pirates—anything—
No one can question you; and I will swear
That Richard still lies in my castle.

JOHN. (*Avoiding LEOPOLD's steady gaze*) Well,
I'll think about it.

LEO. There's no time to think!

JOHN walks up and down nervously clasping his hands.

Give me command of fifty trusty men,
I'll answer for the rest.

JOHN. He may have landed—

LEO. Then there's no harm done—but *your throne is lost.*

JOHN. And how can I rely on you?

LEO. On me?—

Do you suppose I fight for love of you?
Or that I care one farthing for your throne?
Lose it or keep it—'tis all **one** to me.
I seek revenge! The man who stole my bride—
Who flung his cursed glove at me at Acre—
Who before all the world dishonoured me—
Who slipped from out my claws—this man—this fiend—
Shall never gain his throne if I can help it.
I shall be fully satisfied with *him*;
You can take all the booty.

JOHN. (*After a moment*) Well—so be it!
You shall set out this evening—fifty men,
That you can trust to death, shall go with you.

Enter SERVANT L.

SERVANT. (*Announces*) Sir Baldwin de Bethune and Sir Walter de
l'Estaing crave audience of the Prince John.

JOHN. Bring them here.

Exit SERVANT L.

LEO. They here already? Then we must be quick.

JOHN goes R., holds up tapestry.

JOHN. Get you behind the arras, Leopold.

LEO. It is resolved?

JOHN. Assuredly resolved!

LEOPOLD *hides himself behind tapestry R.* *Enter SIR BALDWIN, SIR WALTER,
EDWARD and ROGER. EDWARD and ROGER retire to window. JOHN R,
SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER C. F.*

JOHN. Welcome from Austria, my lords

SIR BALD.

Your grace,

We bring sad news.

JOHN. Sad news, sir? That is strange.
Do they refuse the ransom?

SIR BALD. Nay, your grace,
The ransom was accepted in full council.
But Leopold of Austria is a traitor—
He'll not release the King.

JOHN. Impossible!

SIR WAL. Nothing's impossible with him, your grace,
He is a shame to Knighthood.

JOHN. Then the King
Is still in prison?

SIR BALD. Yes—without a friend.

JOHN. Poor Richard—how I pity him.

SIR BALD. But pity
Will not set Richard free—and, look you, prince,
I am a rough, plain man—the story runs
That you would like to sit on Richard's throne;
Now be not lukewarm or you give it credit.
Remember you are brothers of one blood—
Remember you are called Plantaganet—
And raise an army that shall show the duke
How men of Norman race avenge their wrongs.

JOHN. Baldwin you do me wrong—I need no spur
To prick me on to set my brother free.
I will convoke the barons.

SIR BALD. Saints and fiends!
There is no time to lose. Convoke the barons?
Nay, send your bellmen crying through the streets
"Richard is held by treachery!" Let the fires
Flame from the cliffs. The people will arise
To free their Richard.

A far-off murmur as of many people, heard.

Hark! those distant shouts
Are as a little rill to the great sea
Beside the roars of rage that will resound
When England knows the King's captivity.

SIR WAL. Most true, your grace, for everywhere we passed
Men, women, children, thronged about us—wild
For news of Richard.

JOHN. Sirs, it shall be done—
An army shall be ready in a week;
We'll teach the Austrians a lesson.

SIR BALD. Ah!
There spake Plantaganet.

Noise outside grows a little louder.

JOHN. What is that noise?
It does not stop.

Enter a MESSENGER L. He is breathless.

MESSENGER. (*Panting*) Your grace—your grace—

JOHN. Well—well—

MESSENGER. There's some rebellion in the town—the streets
Grow thick with men.

Enter another MESSENGER L.

SECOND MESS. Your grace—the chancellor
Sends for you—there is trouble.

JOHN. Well—what is it?

SECOND MESS. We know not—but the town is full of men.

JOHN. Go—I will follow you—

Exeunt the two MESSENGERS L.

And—gentlemen—

Await me in the tower.

Exit JOHN L. Noise continues.

SIR BALD. By the Mass!

I fired his sluggish blood. Who would imagine
Richard and he are brothers?

SIR WAL. I am not

So sure of his sincerity.

SIR BALD. He must

Keep faith—for we have news to fire the land.

But how this noise continues.

EDW. (*From by window*) Hark!—

BLONDEL is heard singing below the window the last verse of song in Act I.

SIR BALDWIN runs to window and steps out on balcony.

SIR BALD. Blondel!

BLONDEL. (*From below*) Sir Baldwin! Are you there alone?

SIR BALD. Yes—with de l'Estaing.

BLONDEL. I've a note for you.

My page will bring it—I have other work—

Adieu!

Enter GRETCHEN, by balcony, in page's dress as in Act IV.

GRET. Sir Baldwin!

EDW. Gretchen! by the Cross!

GRETCHEN salutes EDWARD and ROGER coquettishly.

SIR BALD. (*Reads note*) "I have escaped from Leopold by the help
of my good Blondel—I have arrived safely in England—I am about to
enter London publicly—Hold the tower open at any cost. There are
strange rumors of treason.—Richard."

The King is here!

SIR WAL. Long live the King!

EDW.

Huzza!

SIR BALD. (*To EDWARD and ROGER*)

My men, stay here—if any one attempts
To shut the doors—sound the alarm! Come, Walter!

Exeunt SIR BALDWIN and SIR WALTER L.

EDW. (*To GRETCHEN*) So, so, my pretty dear—thou still travellest
with Blondel. Does he treat thee well? (*ALL come F.*)

GRET. Nay, I serve the grey-frock palmer who goes with him.

EDW. A palmer! That is worse still. These holy men are marvellous fellows for a pasty, a flagon, or a pair of bright eyes.

Continued noise outside.

GRET. If thou knewest my palmer thou wouldst keep a civil tongue
about him.

EDW. Is he a jewel of a palmer? Does he kneel religiously at his
devotions?

GRET. He is true to his duty, that's very sure.

EDW. And is the King close at hand?

GRET. Within a few minutes of the Tower. And the people gather
round him, weeping and sobbing, and shouting and laughing as if all
their wits had gone crusading.

EDW. 'Tis ever so with Richard. The more he fights the more we
love him—The more he spends the more we give him—and all is very
right and proper for so must governments go. But thou art wonderfully
bewitching in thy page's dress—and as there is no time to lose I will
tell thee on what I have long pondered.

Assumes oratorical attitude.

Gretchen, I am sick of crusading—I must become a man of peace—a
tamed lion—Blood disgusts me—I am weary of battles.

GRET. Ah ha! Thou fearest King Richard will set out again.

EDW. Of course, he must seek his wife.

GRET. O and he mopes so for her.

EDW. So would any decent man. Had I a wife and somebody ran off
with her—I'd mope and mope till—

ROG. The first tavern you came to set out its bottle.

EDW. Old slanderer! Wilt thou never open thy mouth but to snarl and
bite?

GRET. When friends fall out it is time for me to go.

EDW. Nay but listen, Gretchen—pretty Gretchen—I, Edward, soldier
in the service of Richard 'Cœur-de-Lion—Crusader from the walls of
Acre—a valiant and trustworthy man, though without money or posses-
sions, do here offer thee my heart and hand—the first for life and love
—the second for law and labor. Wilt thou take me, *willy-nilly, volens-
volens*—Ahem!

ROGER *suddenly interposes.*

ROG. Girl, I am a man of few words. I cannot babble, but I can work and be faithful as a dog. I have seen thee and weighed thy qualities. I have a farm in Kent and a thousand marks of booty. Wilt thou marry me?

EDW. Old dog-in-the-manger! Did any one dream thou hadst a heart? O! I am lost! What are love and poetry beside marks and farms!

GRET. (*Coquettishly*) But why must I marry?

EDW. Marry? A girl must marry as a horse must wear a halter, a rabbit be roasted, or a thief dangle from the gallows. It is the fashion, dear, the fashion!

GRET. Thou art as saucy a knave as I ever met, and yet I cannot help liking thee. (*To ROGER*) I know thee, friend, for a true man and a good one; but alas! alas! 'tis not alone such qualities that win us poor girls. We must fain shut our eyes and our senses and run off with the scape-graces. So—

EDW. Then thou art mine?

GRET. Not yet—but—perhaps.

EDWARD *dances with joy and embraces GRETCHEN.*

EDW. But, Roger, there's no ill-feeling between us?

ROG. I am no fool.

The noise is at its height. Shouts heard under the window. Flags move by it, as if carried in a procession from R. to L.

EDW. But see the banners of the barons! (*Runs out on balcony*) He is coming! King Richard is here! Ah! how grand he looks on his great black horse, with his two-handed sword over the saddle. Blondel is with him. He is off his horse. He is coming!—Come! quick! quick!

Exeunt, running, EDWARD, ROGER and GRETCHEN L. Noise ceases—it is very quiet. LEOPOLD emerges from behind the arras—goes to balcony—looks out—comes down C. F.

LEO. Yes, he is here! There is but one way left.

Draws a dagger

If I can get behind him—am I mad?

Were it not best to fly? But no!—no!—no!—

He shall not thwart me—he has always won,

'Tis time that Fate changed front. (*Moves toward R.*)

Come, Richard, come!

He goes again behind tapestry R. The great doors L. swing open. Enter RICHARD, BLONDEL, BERENGARIA (as the pälmer) SIR BALDWIN, SIR WALTER, PRINCE JOHN, EDWARD, ROGER, GRETCHEN and a crowd of noblemen. RICHARD C. F.

RICH. There, there, my friends—you stifle me.

BLON. Ah, sire,
There is not such a gulf 'twixt love and hate
As people think.

RICH. Good friends, go to your homes!
I have returned—alas! I come alone.
Prepare for wars—for we must win our queen
Though all the world make head against our pikes.

JOHN. Sire—

RICH. And I come to find rank treason—yes!
In my own blood—

JOHN. Ah brother!--

RICH. I have heard
All—of your bribe to Leopold—your plot
Against my throne—Ah shame on you—shame! shame!

JOHN. Brother I swear 'tis false—I sent no bribe
To Leopold—I sent your ransom—Yes,
And added largely from my private funds.
As for your throne—God knows I wish it not.

RICH. Call not on God—He hath sent lightnings down
To crush the liar. Kneel and beg for grace.

JOHN. But brother I will give you proof. This day
Leopold came from Austria—

RICH. (*Startled*) Leopold!

JOHN. Here in the Tower he told me of your flight,
Urged me to seize your person—yea! he swore
To watch for you himself, if I would give
A half a hundred men to him.

RICH. And you!

JOHN. I feigned assent, because I knew your coming,
So that I could deliver him to you.
Had I been treasonable, would I not
Have given him all he asked, so that he might
Do all I wished without my help?

RICH. (*Sternly*) The proof!

JOHN. You ask for proof? (*He runs to arras and tears it aside, disclosing LEOPOLD*) Behold!

LEOPOLD *rushes on RICHARD with drawn dagger. BERENGARIA precipitates herself between them, holding up the cross. LEOPOLD taken aback, stops short. The nobles surround him and disarm him.*

GRET. Is not my palmer nimble?

EDW. As a cat

Who runs to help her kittens.

RICHARD *ascends the throne. LEOPOLD is made to stand facing him. SIR BALDWIN, SIR WALTER and others guarding him. BERENGARIA stands F.—R. of throne. JOHN L. of throne.*

RICH. Leopold,

By this last act you forfeit all your rights
Of rank and Knighthood. What is your defense?

LEO. I have none.

RICH. Weigh your words—this is a matter
Of life or death.

LEO. You cannot frighten me.
If I have lost the game I pay the forfeit;
So do your worst.

RICH. My lords this man is found
In our own realm, with treasonable intent
Against our sovereign life.

LEO. That is the truth.
I came to kill you—but for that lean palmer
I should have done so. I make no defense.
You stole my bride, you stole my honor—then
I had you fast and you escaped—there was
But one thing left to do—I tried to do it.

RICH. (*Rises*) Then by the authority of prince and earl
I now degrade you from your state of Knight,
Your life is forfeited, your blood attainted.

'ALL. In the name of the King!

RICH. Further—by virtue of my royal power
That gives me jurisdiction over you,
As you are found in my domain, intent
On treason—I do sentence you to death—
May God have mercy on your soul.

LEO. So be it!
I ask no mercy.

RICH. You would ask in vain.

BER. (*Kneels before RICHARD*)
Sire, you have promised me—

RICH. Aught you may ask.
Palmer, I owe you now a double debt,
To freedom you add life.

BER. Then, sire, I ask
The gift of this man's life.

RICH. No, no! not that!

BER. Your promise, sire!

RICH. My lords must it be kept?

JOHN. I do not think that it can cover treason.

BER. Sire, 'tis your plighted word—I ask again
For this man's life.

LEO. Who art thou, palmer?

BER. One
Who feels no love for you, but pities you.

RICH. The King must keep his word. The man is free.

All fall back from LEOPOLD. BERENGARIA remains kneeling as if in prayer.

My lords we must at once sail for the East,
My queen is there—Saladin holds her—Ah!
War! War! We must to war! (*To BERENGARIA*)

But as for you
I never wish to see your face again—
Go, palmer, learn to hide yourself—your sight
Is odious to me.

BER. (*Rises—her grey frock is loosened*)

O sire! say not that!

The time is come that I may throw this frock
To the four winds, and—

She throws off frock and hood, and stands in robes of white silk—her arms extended.

RICH. (*Running to her*) Berengaria!

They embrace lovingly

BER. My Richard I have followed thee so close
And yet thou didst not know me.

RICH. O my love!

To owe thee all is sweet indeed.

LEO. (*Dumbfounded with surprise*) She—she—
She begged my life? O Heaven pity me!

RICH. Quick, gentlemen, and spread the news abroad;
The palmer who has saved my life is she
Who holds my heart—Let merry feasts be made
In every home. (*To LEOPOLD*)

And as for thee, get hence!

Let no man speak of thy foul shame, for all
Must now be pardoned—that thy noble house
Be left unstained and history kept dumb

LEOPOLD *stands looking at BERENGARIA as if fascinated.—He does not hear*

RICHARD. RICHARD *again embraces BERENGARIA.*

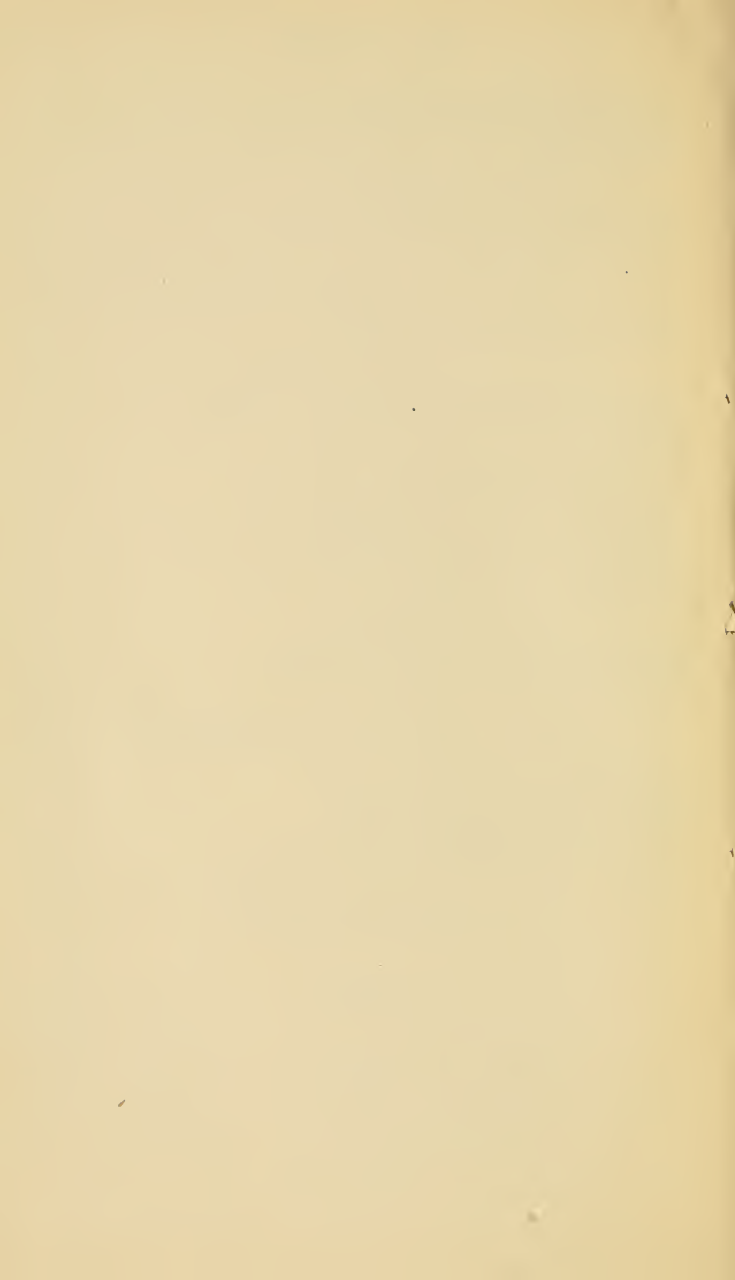
Ah, sirs, these tales will die away full soon
And be mere legends of a fighting age,
Until some witless rhymer turn them o'er
To rouse a random laughter for a day.

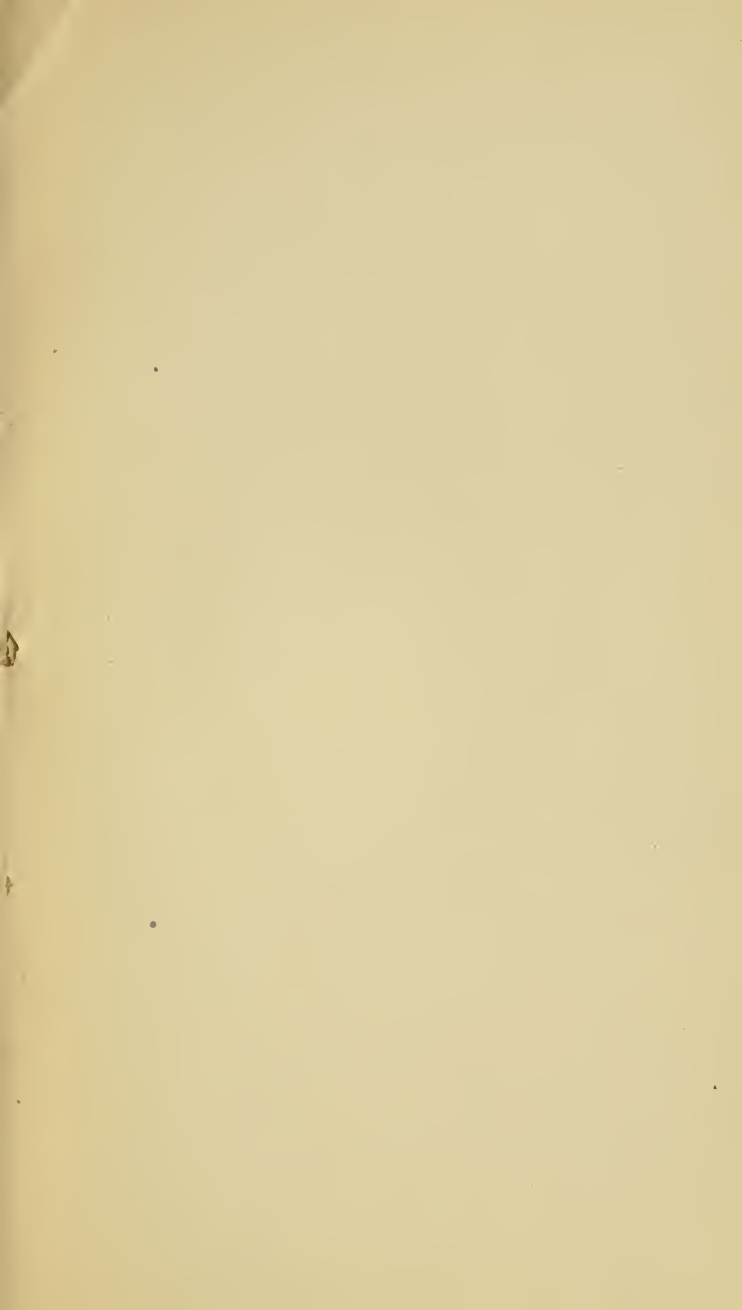
ALL. (*Except LEOPOLD*) Long live the King!

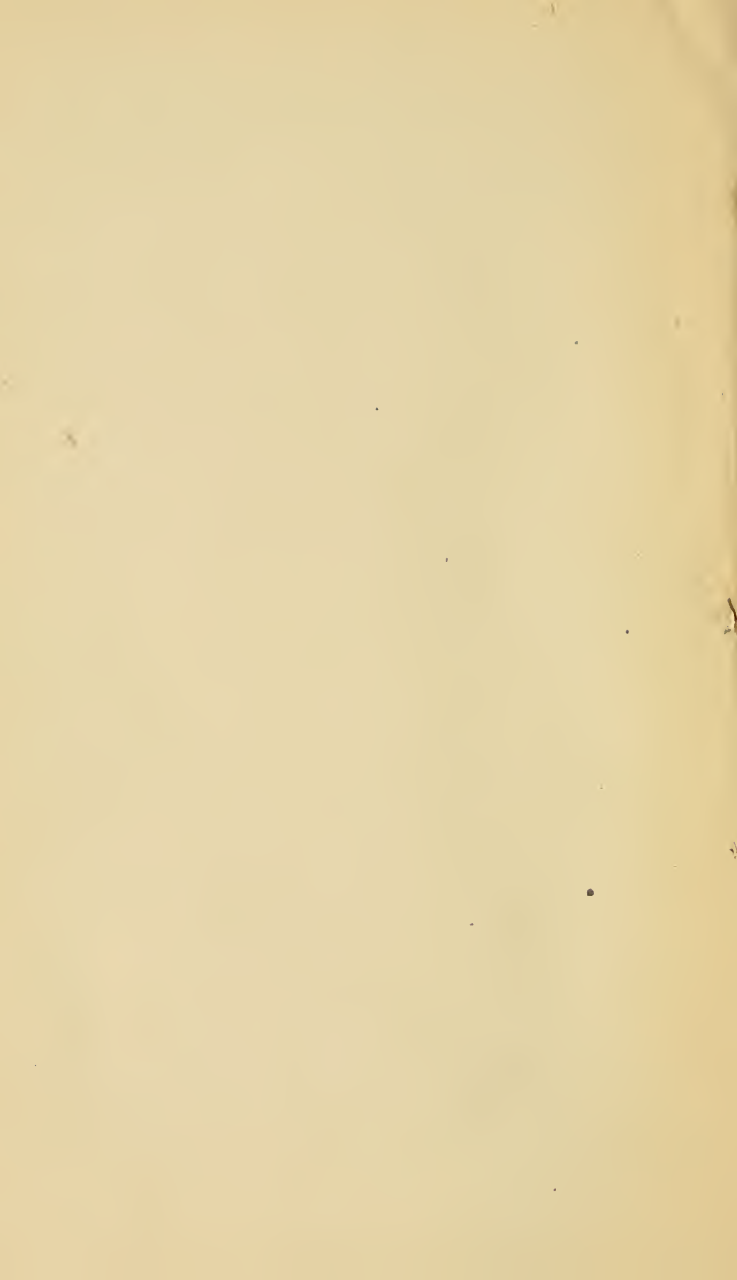
Answering shouts from outside—waving of banners at window. Music,
“O Richard! O mon Roi!”

CURTAIN.

END.







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